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THE CAMBRIDGE ANTHOLOGIES

GENERAL EDITOR: J. DOVER WILSON, LITT.D.

LIFE
IN THE MIDDLE AGES

IN FOUR VOLUMES
VOLUME III

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NURSES AND SUCKLINGS

From a MS. of about 1300 (J Quicherat's *Costume en France*, p 183).

LIFE IN THE MIDDLE AGES

SELECTED
TRANSLATED & ANNOTATED
BY

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VOLUME III
MEN AND MANNERS
with 9 illustrations

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To
MY WIFE

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PREFACE

TO THE FIRST EDITION

THIS book appeals to the increasing body of readers who wish to get at the real Middle Ages; who, however impatient of mere dissertations and discussions, are glad to study genuine human documents, and to check the generalizations of historians by reference to first-hand facts. The Author has, therefore, attempted to compile a catena of such documents, each more or less complete in itself, but mostly too long for full quotation by historians. Moreover, he claims to cover a wider ground than most of the formal histories. The records here printed represent thirty years' study among all kinds of medieval writings, and could scarcely be outdone in this respect but by scholars who have better work to do. They have been chosen as specially characteristic of the period, and as appealing also to that deeper humanity which is common to all minds in all periods. They treat of clergy and laity, saints and sinners; spiritual experiences, love, battles, pageants, and occasionally the small things of everyday life. Drawn from six different languages, the large majority of these extracts are here translated for the first and perhaps the last time, since they are only the cream from bulky and often inaccessible volumes. A few are from manuscripts. If, on the whole, religious life is more fully represented here, and that life itself in its least conventional aspects, this want of strict proportion is more or less inherent in the plan of the work. We do not go abroad to meet Englishmen, or into the Middle Ages for the commonplace; though an occasional touch of this kind may help to show us the essential uniformity of little things in all ages. We most want to hear of those who, for good or evil, stand apart from the rest; and in the Middle Ages, as now, the evil generally lent itself best to picturesque description. The Author has, however, done all he can, consistently with any measure of historical truth, to avoid those darkest

sides of all upon which the scope of his *From St Francis to Dante* compelled him to dwell at some length.

Several of the best books, being easily accessible elsewhere, are omitted here. From one or two more, only just enough is given to indicate the value of the rest, already sufficiently translated. It was impossible, within any reasonable compass, to exploit the rich mine of Franciscan and Dominican record also; a small fraction of these have already been printed in *From St Francis to Dante*, and the rest are reserved for a later volume. With these necessary exceptions, it is hoped that the present selection may be in some real sense representative. How far it is from being exhaustive, those will know best who have read most widely. From such critics the Author can only claim indulgence for this first attempt in English to cover Medieval Life as a whole.

G. G. C.

40 MILL ROAD
EASTBOURNE

May 1910

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PREFACE
TO THE SECOND EDITION

THE original volume was felt by some readers to be rather bulky; here, therefore, it is divided into separately purchasable parts, arranged roughly according to subject. The first and largest deals with *Religion, Folk-Lore and Superstition*; the second, with *Chronicles, Science and Art*; the third, with *Men and Manners*; the fourth, with *Monks, Friars and Nuns*. The first is enlarged by the addition of three extracts which were not in the first edition, two of which refer to subjects of considerable recent interest, St Joan and the Inquisition. The fourth volume is considerably enlarged, especially by the inclusion of My Lord Abbot from *Petit Jean de Saintré*. I have been able to correct a few mistakes and add a few notes; otherwise, there has been little opportunity of bringing the book up to date. For the rearrangement of the extracts and the revision of the proofs, and much other help, I am indebted to my wife.

G. G. C.

ST JOHN'S COLLEGE
CAMBRIDGE

Jan. 1928

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MEN AND MANNERS



From the Chronicle of Gervase, a monk of Canterbury, R.S vol 1, p 258 A Church Council held in Westminster Abbey (A.D. 1176) brought to a head the inveterate rivalry for precedence between the sees of Canterbury and York.

I. ARCHIEPISCOPAL MANNERS

IN the month of March, about Mid-Lent, the king came to London with his son Henry and the Lord Uguccone, Legate of the Pope, who purposed to call together the clergy of England and hold a Council. When therefore the Papal Legate had taken his seat on a raised throne in the midst, and Richard Archbishop of Canterbury, by right of his primacy, had sat down on his right, then Roger Archbishop of York, puffed up with his own innate arrogance to reject the left-hand throne that was destined for him, strove irreverently to sit down between the Legate and his Grace of Canterbury, thrusting with the more uncomely quarters of his body so that he sat down upon the lap of his own Primate. Yet scarce had he struck my lord of Canterbury with that elbow of his wherewith he had been accustomed to fight, when he was ignominiously seized by certain bishops, clerics, and laymen, and torn from the Archbishop's lap, and cast upon the floor. But, when staves and fists were now wielded on both sides, the Archbishop of Canterbury sprang up and returned good for evil, snatching away from this disastrous conflict his own rival and the inveterate enemy of his see. At length the contumacious Archbishop of York, rising from the pavement with his cape torn ignominiously by the struggle, fell down at the king's feet and belched forth lying¹ calumnies against the Archbishop of Canterbury.

¹ *Mendosam* should probably be *mendacem*.

LIFE IN THE MIDDLE AGES

Peter of Blois, descended from a noble Breton family, distinguished himself greatly at the Universities of Paris and Bologna, and was invited by Henry II to England, where he became successively Archdeacon of Bath and of London, and died in 1200. He earned a world-wide reputation by his Letters, the popularity of which called forth spurious imitations. The following extract is from his fourteenth letter, "to the Royal Chaplains of Henry II." He relates how his recent illness has opened his eyes to the miseries of court life, where "these martyrs of the world, through many tribulations, enter into the kingdom of hell." He therefore exhorts his friends to retire likewise from a place not only so perilous to the soul, but so comfortless to the body. Bad enough are the racket and disorder, the weariness of constant travel from manor to manor; but, to any man of delicate perceptions, the meals are worst of all.

2. A ROYAL INFERNO

FOR all who fight in the camp of ambition have been taken prisoners by Nahash the Ammonite, and have lost their right eyes [1 Sam. xi, 2]; for they are keen-sighted to acquire worldly things, but pay no heed to the loss of this passing life and to the imminent torments of everlasting death. . . . They are wise (saith the Prophet) to do evils, but to do good they have no knowledge. . . . This I marvel most, how any man can suffer the miseries of court life who hath long been used to the warfare of learning and the camp of university discipline. For (to return to the courtiers) they know neither order nor reason nor measure in their meals, or in their ridings abroad, or in their nightly watchings. Court chaplains and knights are served with bread hastily made, without leaven, from the dregs of the ale-tub—leaden bread, bread of tares, bread unbaken. The wine is turned sour or mouldy; thick, greasy, stale, flat, and smacking of pitch [from the cask]. I have sometimes seen even great lords served with wine so muddy that a man must needs close his eyes and clench his teeth, wry-mouthed and shuddering, and filtering the stuff rather than drinking. The ale which men drink in that place is horrid to the taste and abominable to the sight. There also, (such is the concourse of people), sick and whole beasts are sold at random, with fishes even four days old; yet shall not all this corruption and stench abate one penny of the price; for the servants reck not whether an unhappy guest fall sick or die, so that their lords'

A ROYAL INFERNO

tables be served with a multitude of dishes; we who sit at meat must needs fill our bellies with carrion, and become graves (as it were) for sundry corpses. Many more would die of such corrupt stuff, but that the ravenous clamour of our maw, and the Scyllaeen whirlpool of that dark abyss, with the help of laborious exercise, consumeth all at last. Yet even so, if the court dwell longer than usual in any town, some courtiers are ever left behind to die. I cannot endure (to say nothing of others) the vexations of the royal stewards—fawning flatterers, wicked backbiters, unprincipled extortioners: wearisome with their importunities for gifts, ungrateful for benefits received, malignant to all such as are loth to give again and again. I have known many who have dealt liberal largesse to such stewards; yet, when with much labour they had sought their lodging after a long day's journey, while their supper was yet half-cooked, or again while they sat at meat—nay, even while they slept on their bed, these stewards would come swelling with pride and contumely, cut the horses' halters, cast forth the baggage recklessly and perchance not without grievous loss, and expel the guests with so little ceremony that these, (for all their wealth and their provision of travelling bed-gear) had not where to lay their heads that night. This again addeth to the courtiers' misery, that if the king have promised to stay anywhere, and especially if the herald have publicly proclaimed this as the royal will, then be sure that he will set out at daybreak, mocking all men's expectation by his sudden change of purpose. Whereby it cometh frequently to pass that such courtiers as have let themselves be bled, or have taken some purgative, must yet follow their prince forthwith without regard to their own bodies, and, setting their life on the hazard of a die, hasten blindfold to ruin for dread of losing that which they have not, nor never shall have. Then may ye see men rush forth like madmen, sumpter-mules jostling sumpter-mules and chariots clashing against chariots in frantic confusion, a very Pandemonium made visible. Or again, if the Prince have proclaimed his purpose of setting out for a certain place with the morrow's dawn, then will he surely change his purpose; doubt not but that he will lie abed till mid-day. Here wait the sumpters

LIFE IN THE MIDDLE AGES

standing under their loads, the chariots idly silent, the outriders asleep, the royal merchants in anxious expectation, and all murmuring together men flock round the court prostitutes and vintners, (a kind of courtiers who often know the palace secrets), to get tidings of the king's journey. For the king's train swarms with play-actors and washerwomen, dicers and flatterers, taverners, waferers,¹ buffoons, barbers, tumblers, and all birds of that feather. Oftentimes have I seen how, when the king slept and all things were in quiet silence, there leapt down a word from the royal quarters, not almighty indeed, yet all-awakening,² and naming that city or town for which the court must now set out. After the long weariness of delay and suspense, we solaced ourselves with the expectation of sleeping there, where (as we hoped) lodging and food would abundantly be found for so great was the press, so confused and tumultuous the wandering crowds of horse and foot, that the abyss seemed to have been opened, and hell to vomit forth his legions. Yet, when our outriders had now well-nigh or fully gone the whole day's journey, then again would the king change his purpose and lodge elsewhere, having perchance a single house and victuals enough for himself alone, whereof no other might share yea, and I verily believe (if I may dare so to speak) that he hath found in our anguish a keener zest to his own pleasures. We therefore, wandering for three or four miles through unknown forests, and oftentimes in the black darkness, esteemed ourselves fortunate if perchance we fell upon some vile and sordid hovel. Oftentimes the courtiers would fight bitterly and obstinately for mere huts, and contend with drawn swords for a lair which had been unworthy of contention among swine. How we and our beasts fared meanwhile on such a night may well be imagined: I myself was so divided from my train that it was scarce possible to collect the scattered remnants within three days. Almighty God on high, Thou Who art King of kings and Lord of lords, and terrible with the kings of earth, Who takest away the spirit of princes, Who givest health to kings,

Makers of wafers (Fr *gaufres*), or thin sweet cakes. It appears that they enjoyed no very good reputation, see *Piers Plowman*, A, vi, 120.

² This is parodied from Wisdom xviii, 14.

A ROYAL INFERNO

in Whose hand is the king's heart and Who turnest it whither-soever Thou wilt, turn now and convert the king's heart from this his pestilent custom, that he may know himself to be but a man, and may learn by use to show the grace of royal liberality and the kindness of human compassion to those men who are drawn after him not by ambition but by necessity!

Ralph Higden, a monk of Chester, died in 1364. His *Polychronicon* is not only a digest of such chronicles as the author could get hold of, but also a popular encyclopaedia—it has no original merit, but is most valuable as showing a learned man's outlook on the world during Chaucer's boyhood. The book was translated in 1367 by John Trevisa, chaplain to Lord Berkeley, and is printed in the Rolls Series.

3. FAIR ROSAMUND

(R S vol. viii, p. 53.)

BUT when King Henry had visited meekly Thomas the martyr's tomb, William the king of Scotland and the two earls of Chester and of Lincoln were taken at Alnwick. This mischief endured two years, and was unnethe ceased, and he accounted the ceasing thereof to his own strength, and not to God's mercy, and he that had imprisoned his wife Eleanor the queen, and was privily a spouse-breaker, liveth now openly in spouse-breach, and is not ashamed to misuse the wench Rosamund. To this fair wench the king made at Woodstock a chamber of wonder craft, wonderly y-made by Daedalus' work, lest the queen should find and take Rosamond: but the wench died soon, and is buried in the chapter-house at Godstowe beside Oxenford with such a writing on her tomb:

Hic jacet in tumba rosa mundi, non rosa munda.
Non redolet, sed olet, quae redolere solet,

that is, Here lieth in tomb the rose of the world, nought a clean rose; it smelleth nought sweet, but it stinketh, that was wont to smell full sweet. This wench had a little coffer, scarcely of two feet long, made by a wonder craft, that is yet y-seen there. Therein it seemeth that giants fight, beasts

LIFE IN THE MIDDLE AGES

startle, fowls flee, and fishes move without men's hand-moving....

(viii, 99) In the year of our Lord God 1192, St Hugh, bishop of Lincoln, making visitations by religious places in his diocese, came to the monastery of Godstowe nigh to Oxenford. Which, entering into the church to make his prayers, saw a tomb in the midst of the choir before the high altar covered with cloths of silk, and lamps and tapers burning about it. And the bishop inquired anon what person was buried there, people present answered, saying that [it was] Rosamond, friend to king Henry II, for whom the king had done many great benefits to their church. Then the bishop commanded that she should be buried out of the church with other people, saying that she was an harlot, lest the religion of Christ decrease, that ill-disposed women may take example by her to avoid the sin of adultery and of lechery.

4. A PLAIN-SPOKEN PATRIARCH

(*Ib.* p. 69.)

THAT time [A.D. 1185] came Heraclius, patriarch of Jerusalem, into England to king Henry, and prayed him help against the Saracens in the name of all the Christian men of the eastern lands, and proffered him the keys of the holy city and of our Lord's grave, with the king's banner, and letters of Lucius the pope (that counselled and charged him that he should take that journey, and had mind of the oath that he had made), but the king put over his answer before he came to London; and, by the presence of the patriarch and of Baldwin the archbishop, many took the cross to the Holy Land. But Henry answered and said that he might not forsake and leave his lands without ward and keeping, neither set them to be prey to be robbed of Frenchmen; but he would give largely of his to men that would thither go. "King," quoth the patriarch, "it is nought that thou dost; we seek and ask a prince, and not money; nigh every land of the world sendeth us money, but no land sendeth us a prince; therefore

A PLAIN-SPOKEN PATRIARCH

we ask a man that needeth money, and not money that needeth a man", and so the patriarch goeth his way, and his hope is lost; and the king followeth him anon to the sea, for he would with fair words, as he could well, please the patriarch that was grieved. But the patriarch spake to the king and said, "Hitherto thou hast reigned gloriously, but hereafter He will forsake thee That thou hast forsaken Think and have mind what our Lord hath given thee, and what thou hast given Him again; how thou wert false to the king of France, and slewest St Thomas, and now thou forsakest the defence and protection of Christian men." The king was wroth with these words; the patriarch saw that, and proffered him his head and his neck, and said, "Do by me right as thou didst by Thomas, for me is as lief be slain of thee in England as of Saracens in Syria, for thou art worse than any Saracen." "Though all my men," quoth the king, "were one body and spake with one mouth, they durst not speak to me such words!" "No wonder," quoth the patriarch, "for they love thine, and not thee. This people followeth prey, and not a man." Then the king said, "I may not go out of my lands, for mine own sons would arise against me when I was absent." "No wonder," quoth the patriarch, "for of the devil they come, and to the devil they shall". . . Also that year [1188] fell strife between the kings of England and of France, and all the money was wasted that was gathered in tithes for the journey in going to Jerusalem; for at the city of Le Mans the king of France and Richard earl of Poitou came against the king of England, and king Henry set the suburbs afire, for a device that his enemies should have no succour therein; but the strength of the wind drove the flame of the fire into the town, and burnt up all the city, and compelled king Henry to go out of the city; and the king in his going from the city spake such words and said: "For that Thou, God, hast taken from me this day the city that I most loved in this world, I shall requite Thee. For after this time I shall take from Thee the thing that should most please Thee in me, that is mine heart."

LIFE IN THE MIDDLE AGES

Roger de Hoveden, RS vol III, p 35; laws published by Richard I for those who sailed on his crusade. Similar and more elaborate legislation for crusaders may be found in A. Schultz, *Hofisches Leben*, etc. Band II, S 220 ff.

5. SHIPMAN'S LAW

MEANWHILE [A.D. 1190] King Richard went into Gascony, and laid siege to the castle of William de Chisi and took it, and hanged William himself, the lord of that castle, for that he had robbed pilgrims to Compostella and others that passed over his domains. Then the king went to Chinon in Anjou, where he appointed Gerard bishop of Auch, and Bernard bishop of Bayonne, and Robert de Sablon, and Richard de Camville, and William de Forz of Oleron as leaders and constables over his whole fleet which was to sail for Silves;¹ unto whom he gave a charter in this form following: "Richard by the grace of God king of England, Duke of Normandy and Aquitaine, and Count of Anjou, to all his men who are about to go to Jerusalem by sea, greeting Know that we, by the common counsel of honourable men, have made these rules of justice here following. Whosoever shall kill a man on board ship, let him be bound to the corpse and cast into the sea; but if he kill him on land, let him be bound to the corpse and buried alive. Whosoever hath been convicted by lawful witnesses of drawing his knife to strike another, or of striking him even to the shedding of blood, let him lose his hand: but if he have struck him with the palm, and shed no blood, let him be thrice dipped in the sea. If any cast upon his fellow either contumely or reviling or God's curse, then, so often as he have reviled him, so many ounces of silver let him pay. If any robber be convicted of theft, let him be shorn like a champion, and boiling pitch be poured over his head, and let the feathers of a feather-bed be shaken over his head that all men may know him, and at the first spot where the ships shall come to land, let him be cast forth. Given at Chinon, under

¹ Near Cape St Vincent, where they were to land on their way to Palestine. The tale of their doings at Lisbon (Hoveden, p. 45) suggests that Richard's laws were scarcely more strictly kept than those of other medieval sovereigns. Schultz (*loc.*) gives other evidence to the same effect.

SHIPMAN'S LAW

our own hand." Moreover the king enjoined in another brief under his own hand, that all his men who were to go by sea should obey the words and precepts of these aforesaid justiciars of his fleet.

The account of the journey itself, though too long for insertion here, is extremely interesting. It may be found in Riley's translation of Hoveden (Bohn, 1853, vol II, pp. 143 ff) I subjoin as an illustration of the above ship-laws, some extracts from T D Wunderer's account of his voyage on a great Hanse Ship from Riga to Tramünd in 1590 (Fichard, *Frankfurtisches Archiv*, Band II, S 245) Though the date is late, the main features of the ordinances there described had doubtless been handed down from very early times.

6. LIFE ON A HANSE SHIP

AFTER we had driven half a day under full sail [from Riga], then the Skipper, Bernhard Schultz of Lübeck, called us together according to custom and made the usual speech to us, who were forty-seven all told, to the following purport: "Seeing that we are now at the mercy of God and the elements, each shall henceforth be held equal to his fellows, without respect of persons. And because, on this voyage, we are in jeopardy of sudden tempests, pirates, monsters of the deep and other perils, therefore we cannot navigate the ship without strict government. Wherefore I do hereby most earnestly warn and instantly beseech every man, all and singular, that we hear first of all a reading of God's word from the Scriptures, both text and notes; and then that we approach God steadfastly with prayer and hymn that He may vouchsafe us fair winds and a prosperous journey. After which we will set about to ordain and establish a government by the most prudent according to the customary sea-laws; which office (as sea-law hath it) no man may refuse to undertake, but must rather be ready to exercise it strictly and without respect of persons, even as each desireth that God may deal with him at his last end and at that dreadful day, truly and without flinching, and with all diligence that may be." Then followed the preaching and prayers, after which the

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aforesaid Skipper, by universal consent, chose as our judge or Reeve a noted citizen of Riga, Dietrich Finger by name: after whom he chose four assessors, firstly Herr Albrecht Veldthusen, a Councillor of Mittau, the capital of Curland; secondly and thirdly me and my fellow-traveller Conrad Dasypodius of Strassburg, and fourthly Elias Kiesel, bailiff of the castle of Candau in Curland. Lastly, to serve these, he chose two Procurators, a Watchmaster, a Scribe, an Executor or Masterman, and a Provost-Marshal with two servants. After which ordinance of our government, then the following sea-laws were read out from the written text, that men might obey them. [A few of these regulations may here be given: *e g.* IV. Let every man beware of sleeping on his watch, if he be caught sleeping, let him be punished by common sea-law: that is, let him be hauled through under the keel: yet this law must be interpreted with due respect of persons. VI. No man shall cause tumult or disturbance on board, under penalty of the common mariners' punishment; that is, let him be hauled through under the keel, yet with due respect of circumstances and persons. IX. No man shall draw his sword in anger against another on board ship, whether the weapon be long or short, under penalty of sea-law. that is, let the weapon be struck through the offender's hand into the foremast, so that, if he will go free, he must himself draw the sword out of his hand: yet this should be interpreted with due respect to circumstances. X. No man shall promise another to fight or quarrel with him when he is come to land, under penalty of the [land] court when the fact is established. XII. No man shall spill or pour away more beer than he can cover with his foot, under penalty of a cask of beer, or less according to the circumstances.]. . . When therefore we were come within near half a day's sail of the port of Tramund, in the territory of Lubeck, then the Keel-master or Skipper made his reckoning according to custom, after which the Bailiff resigned the command which he had held with the following words: "Whatsoever hath passed and befallen on shipboard all this time, each man should forgive to every man his fellow, overlook it, and let it be dead and gone, even as I for my part am glad to do; for, what-

LIFE ON A HANSE SHIP

soever doom I and my assessors may have given, all must needs be so dealt and kept for judgment's and justice' sake. Wherefore I beseech all and singular, with regard to all our honest judgments, that each will lay aside such enmity as he may have conceived against another, and swear an oath by salt and bread that he will never more think bitterly of that matter. If however any yet thinketh that any matter have been unwarrantably judged, let him speak out now when we can yet dispute of that matter; whereunto I for my part will give all possible diligence to settle the dispute, and leave no stone unturned. Otherwise, let him appeal to the Portreeve at Tramund, as hath been the custom from time immemorial unto this day, and claim a judgment before this day's sundown. And may God Almighty hear me now and grant me further good fortune, health, and all well-being in all future voyages; which also I wish from the bottom of my heart to all here present." Then each man took forthwith salt and bread, in token of hearty forgiveness for all that might have befallen.

The following extract, while illustrating that phrase in King Richard's laws, "shorn like a champion," will also throw light on one of the most characteristic customs of the earlier Middle Ages. It is from the book which goes under the name of Britton, a Norman-French legal compilation made from authoritative sources about the year 1290. The translation here quoted is that of the standard edition (F. M. Nichols, Clarendon Press, 1865, vol. 1, pp. 104 ff. For further references to this subject, see Extract 40).

7. TRIAL BY BATTLE

IF the defendant cannot abate the appeal, then it shall be in his election, whether he will defend himself by his body or by the country,¹ and so in all felonies prosecuted by private persons, except in special cases, as of women, persons maimed, and others who neither can nor ought to wage battle. And if he says, by his body, and it be in the case of felony at the prosecution of another, then let the matter be examined before battle is joined, whether the cause be trespass or felony; and if trespass, let the appeal be abated by the Justices *ex officio*.

¹ *I.e.* by referring the case to a jury.

LIFE IN THE MIDDLE AGES

But if felony, then let the defendant give security to defend himself, and the appellor security to prove the cause; next let a day be given them to provide themselves with arms, and let the defendant in the meantime remain in prison.

When they appear armed in Court, let the plaintiff repeat his appeal word for word as he did before, and the defendant



CHAMPIONS FIGHTING

From a thirteenth-century encaustic tile found on the site of Chertsey Abbey.
(H Shaw's *Specimens of Tile Pavements*, pl. xvii.)

defend himself as before; and afterwards let them take each other by the hand, and let the defendant swear first in this manner, and the appellor afterwards as shall be presently more fully set forth. "Hear this, you man whom I hold by

TRIAL BY BATTLE

the hand, who call yourself John by your name of baptism, that I, Peter, did not in such a year, nor on such a day, nor in such a place, compass or propose the death aforesaid, nor did assent to such felony as you have charged me with, so help me God and the Saints." Afterwards the appellor shall swear thus. "Hear this, you man whom I hold by the hand, who call yourself Peter by your name of baptism, that you are perjured, inasmuch as on such a day, in such a year, and in such a place, you did propose such a treason or such a death as I have said against you in the appeal, so help me God and the Saints."

Then let them both be brought to a place appointed for that purpose, where they must swear thus. "Hear this, ye Justices, that I John (or I Peter) have neither eaten nor drunk anything, nor done or caused to be done for me any other thing, whereby the law of God may be abased, and the law of the devil advanced or exalted." And thus let it be done in all battles in appeals of felony. And let proclamation be immediately made, that no one, except the combatants, whatever thing he see or hear, be so bold as to stir, or cry aloud, whereby the battle may be disturbed; and whosoever disobeys the proclamation shall be imprisoned a year and a day.

Next, let them go to combat, armed without iron and without the slightest armour, their heads uncovered, their hands and feet bare, with two staves tipped with horn of equal length, and each of them a target of four corners, without any other arms, whereby either of them may annoy the other; and if either of them have any other arms concealed about him, and therewith annoy or offer to annoy his adversary, let it be done as shall be mentioned in treating of battle in a plea of land.

If the defendant can defend himself until the stars can be seen in the firmament, and demands judgment whether he ought to combat any longer, our will is, that judgment pass for the defendant, and so in all battles between champions; and in the case of felony the appellor shall be committed to prison. And if the defendant will confess the felony before he is otherwise attainted, and appeal others of consenting to the same, we allow him to be admitted thereto.

LIFE IN THE MIDDLE AGES

And if the defendant be vanquished, let the judgment be this, that he be drawn and hanged, or put to such other painful death as we shall direct, and that all his movable goods be ours, and his heirs disinherited; and his children shall be incapable of ever holding land in our realm. And let not any, unless they would be suspected themselves of the felony, presume to intercede for him; and let the accuser, who without delay shall prosecute such felony with good effect, receive from us a notable reward.

Walther v. der Vogelweide was born of a knightly stock, perhaps in Tyrol. He tells us himself that he learnt his art in Austria. He lived some time at the Court of Vienna, but fell out of favour at the death of his patron in 1198. For the next twenty years or more he took to the profession of a wandering minstrel—perhaps he was the first nobleman who ever did so. In 1203 we find him at the court of the Bishop of Passau, where he receives clothes in the capacity of "singer," just as Chaucer did from other patrons in that of page. At another time he was at the Wartburg, where he knew Wolfram von Eschenbach and perhaps St Elizabeth. He was attached to the Emperors Philip of Swabia, Otto of Brunswick, and Frederick II, from the last of whom he received after many years a fief of his own (1220), and was no longer obliged to live from hand to mouth. The third of the pieces here translated alludes to the Emperor's excommunication in 1227, as he was on the point of starting for his crusade. Walther probably started next year in the Emperor's train, and died soon after his return in 1229. He is certainly one of the greatest lyric poets of the Middle Ages, and his poems are so cheaply procurable, either in the original or in modern German versions, that I subjoin these brief specimens in the hope of tempting more readers to independent study.

8. FLOWERS AND FAIR LADIES

(So die bluomen us dem grase dringent, Lachmann, 45, 37.)

ON a May morning at daybreak, when the blossoms crowd forth from the grass like laughing faces in the merry sunshine, and little fowls sing the sweetest lays that their hearts can find, what joy may then be compared to this? It is well half a kingdom of heaven! Shall I confess what this is like? Then I say what hath oftentimes brought still more bliss to mine eyes, and would bring it yet again, could I but see it.

FLOWERS AND FAIR LADIES

When a noble lady, fair and clean, daintily clad, daintily kempt and tired, moveth for pastime among a crowd of folk, in courtly pride and with a courtly train, looking round her now and again even as the sun standeth in comparison with the stars—then let May bring her best marvels, what hath she among them all so enchanting as this lady's lovely shape, to gaze at whom we turn our backs on all the flowers of spring?

See here then, will ye know the truth?—go we now to May's bridal feast, for the merry month is come with all her charms! Look here on the fields and there on the worshipful ladies, which may outshine the other, and see whether I have not chosen the better part! If, to my woe, any man should bid me choose; if indeed I must leave the one to cleave unto the other, how straight and sheer should be my choice! Lady May, thou mightest be March for me, ere I would leave my lady there!

9. LOVE AND DREAM

(*Nemt, frouwe, disen kranz*, Lachmann, 74, 20.)

"TAKE, Lady, this garland": thus spake I to a maid in fair attire: "then will you grace the dance with these bright flowers in your hair. Had I many jewels of price, by your gracious leave all should be set on your head; mark my troth, that I mean it well.

"Lady, you are so comely clad that I rejoice to give you my coronet, the best of all that I have. Flowers know I many, white and red, that stand hard by on yonder heath: so sweetly they spring, and so sweet the birds sing, there shall we twain pluck them together."¹

¹ *Blumen brechen*, "to pluck flowers" was a time-honoured poetic phrase for courting in the fields: cf. the first two stanzas of Walther's *Nightingale* ("Under der Linden," Lachmann, 39, 11):

Under the linden
Amid the heather,
There where our place of resting was,
There might ye finden,
Fair together,

LIFE IN THE MIDDLE AGES

She took that I offered her, even as a child that is honoured; her cheeks flushed red, as a rose in a bed of lilies; then her bright eyes were ashamed, yet she sweetly bowed in greeting to me. This was my guerdon; if I had more reward, that I keep to mine own heart.

Methought I had never greater bliss than this content of mind. The blossoms from the trees fell all the while around us on the grass, lo! then must I laugh aloud for joy. Yet, even while I was so merry and so rich in my dream, then the day dawned and I must needs awake!

This hath she wrought in me, that all this summer long I must look well-nigh all maidens in the eyes, thus perchance might I find mine own, and then my care were gone! What if she pace this very dance? Ladies, of your gracious kindness raise the chaplets on your brows.—Alas, would that I could see her under some garland!

10. A WORLD GROWING OLD

(Ouwre war sint verswunden alliu minnu jar? Lachmann, 124, 1.)

ALAS! whither then are all my years fled? Hath this life of mine been but a dream, or is it true? That which I ever held for truth, was it naught all this while? then have I slept this many a year, and knew it not myself! Now am I awakened, and all is far and strange, yea though it were heretofore more homely to me than my two hands. Land and folk, where I was nurtured from my childhood up, are become as unknown

Broken flowers and broken grass
By the wood-side in a dale,

Tandaradet,
Sweetly sang the nightingale.

To our field-meeting
Stole I at even;

There was my true love come before!
So sweet was his greeting

(Lady of heaven!)
That I am blessed for ever more.

Kissed he me? Yea, thousandfold!
Tandaradet,

See, my red lips are not yet cold.

A WORLD GROWING OLD

to me as were it all a lie! They that were my playfellows are waxen dull and old; tilled is the fallow field, felled is the forest; but that the water floweth as it flowed of yore, then methinks my mishap would be sore indeed. Many a man is slow to greet me, whom once I knew right well; the world on all sides is full of ungrace. When now I think on many a joyous day that is passed from me as the stroke passeth when men smite the sea, then evermore alas!

Alas! how miserably thrive the young folk, whose minds once felt no rue! In these days they know naught but care; alas! why go they thus? Whithersoever I turn in the world, no man is merry; dancing, singing, are all perished for sorrow; never saw Christian folk so wretched a year. Mark now how the wimple sitteth on the noble lady, and how the haughty knights go clad in village weeds! Unsoft letters are come to us from Rome; we have license to mourn, but our joy is taken clean away. That wringeth my heart so sore (for of old we lived in peace) that I must now choose weeping for my laughter that was of yore. The very fowls of the air are troubled by our lamentations; what wonder if I myself am in despair? Why speak I thus like a fool in my bitter wrath? Whoso followeth after present bliss hath lost the joys of heaven for evermore, alas!

Alas! how vainly have we spent ourselves upon the sweets of earth! I see the bitter gall floating amidst the honey. Fair is the world to outward show, white and green and red, yet inwardly she is black of hue, and dismal as death. He whom she hath seduced, let him look now to his comfort, for great trespass may be atoned by little penance. Think thereon, ye knights, for this is your concern, ye who bear glittering helms and many a hard ring of steel, and stout shields withal and hallowed blades. Would God that I too were worthy of this victory! for then would I, poor and needy as I am, earn a rich reward. I mean not fiefs or barons' gold, but I myself would bear an everlasting crown, such as any soldier might win with his good spear. If I might once go this dear journey over sea, then would I thenceforth sing O joy! and never more Alas!

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The so-called *Lanercost Chronicle*, from which these extracts are taken, was not written at the monastery of that name, as earlier antiquaries supposed, but by a Grey Friar, probably of Carlisle. It extends in its original form to 1307, but is partly based on older materials. Like nearly all compilations by the early friars, it is full of picturesque anecdotes and human touches. It was edited for the Maitland Club by Father Stevenson in 1839. A translation of the greater part of it by Sir Herbert Maxwell was printed in the *Scottish Historical Review*; though not always accurate, it is very readable and interesting.

II. A ROYAL NEMESIS

(p. 48, A.D. 1241.)

IN this same year, Alexander [II] King of the Scots had a son, whom he called after his own name, born of his second wife, Marie de Coucy, whom he had brought from beyond the seas. And because, though it be good to keep close the secret of a king, yet it is honourable to publish God's works abroad, therefore I will briefly touch upon a noteworthy event which came to pass at that boy's birth. We know how it is written, "God will not despise the supplication of the fatherless, nor the widow when she poureth out her complaint." This I record because, when the said King Alexander had prepared his departure from Edinburgh Castle, where he had stayed for a while, then as he rode through his borough there met him an old woman, the widow of a certain burgher; who, drawing nigh to the king's bridle, held out to him a handful of wooden tallies,¹ crying, "Behold, my lord king, I who was once rich and am now sunken in poverty have received the whole revenues of my possessions in these tallies, which thy servants have given me again and again for food to thine household, and which I now give up to thee; only beseeching thee to pay me for the one hen wherein I thought myself rich until yester-morn, when thy vassals tore her from me; pay me that alone, for I scorn the rest of my losses." Then the king, flushed with shame, replied, "Lady, they shall be well paid unto thee; bear for the present with this debt and that

¹ Two exactly corresponding pieces of wood, for keeping and checking accounts. The buyer kept one, the seller another, at each fresh transaction the two were fitted together so that a single fresh notch with a knife left a corresponding record on each tally.

A ROYAL NEMESIS

debt." With that he spurred his horse, but she followed after him with this grievous curse: "The God of heaven," quoth she, "grant thee the same joy in thine only-begotten son, as I had yesterday when I saw my hen with her neck wrung." At which the prince in terror stretched out his open hands to heaven, saying: "O God, I beseech thee for my part that Thou pay no heed to her prayers." The Almighty, to Whom each side had cried for judgment, deferred in His patience to inflict the imprecated curse, yet He who saith *I will repay*, after a long interval of respite, fulfilled it more clearly than daylight.¹ Thus, as saith the Scripture, "Do not the tears run down the widow's cheeks; and is not her cry against him that causeth them to fall."

12. DEATH OF ALEXANDER III

(p. 115.)

IN the course of this year (1285-6) a sudden death removed Alexander King of Scotland, after a reign of 36 years and 9 months. He departed this world on the 19th day of March, on a Monday night, on the eve of St Cuthbert, Bishop and Confessor, the liberties and boundaries of whose see he and his vassals had harried for the last three years. . . . Moreover, all that year and throughout that province a boding word was current among the Scots, that on that day would be the day of judgment; whereat many feared but some scoffed. Moreover, in the December next preceding, under the sign of Capricorn, men heard terrible thunder and saw lightning, which in wise men's judgment foreboded the fall of princes, wherefore he was warned to beware; but all these bodings, with many more, availed not to teach him, so that God punished him through his own sins. For his wont was to spare for neither time nor tempest, for perils of waters nor for rugged cliffs; but by night or day, even as the humour took him, he would sometimes change his guise, and often ride

¹ The editor's or scribe's *interpretatum* should obviously be *imprecatum*. The fulfilment is described in the next piece.

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with a single companion to visit, in no way of honour, matrons or nuns, maidens or widows. Wherefore, on this same day whereon the judgment hung over him, yet he knew it not, so grievous a tempest burst upon the land that to me and many other men it seemed too bitter to uncover our faces against the north wind, the rain, and the snow. On this day, in his high Maidens' Castle [of Edinburgh], with a great throng of barons, he held a council concerning the answer to be given to the king's messengers of England, who on the third day were to come to Norham, bringing with them Thomas of Galloway, whose deliverance from prison was then demanded by John de Baliol the younger. When dinner-time was come, then the king's brow cleared amid the meat and drink, and he sent a present of fresh lampreys to one of his barons, bidding him through the squire that brought it to feast merrily, and remember that this day was the day of judgment. He, with many thanks, answered jestingly to his lord: "If to-day be the day of judgment, then shall we soon rise with full bellies!" When the long feast was ended, and night began to fall, then neither the foul weather nor the lords' persuasion could withhold the king from hastening forth to the Queen's Ferry, there to visit his new bride, daughter to the Count of Dreux, Yolette by name, whom he had brought shortly before this from beyond the sea, to his own woe and the eternal affliction of the whole country, for she dwelt then at Kinghorn, and (as many tell) before her espousal she had taken the veil beyond the sea in a convent of nuns, but had looked backwards from the plough through feminine fickleness and ambition for the crown. When the king came to the hamlet by the ferry-side, the master of the boats overtook him and warned him of his peril, and would have persuaded him to return. "Fearest thou then," quoth the king, "to stay with me?" "God forbid," quoth he, "for it is just and fitting that I should go with thy father's son to the death." So the king came in black darkness to the town of Inverkennan, with only three squires in his train, when the master of his salt-pans, a married man of that town, knew his voice and cried: "Lord, what do you here at such a time and in this darkness? Oftentimes have I warned you that

DEATH OF ALEXANDER III

your night journeys would have an evil issue; now therefore tarry with me, where we will provide you with honourable lodging and all that you need until morning light." "Nay," said the king, and laughed; "we have no need of thy lodging but lend me two of thy servants to go on foot and show us the way." When therefore they had gone some two miles forward, then both these and those lost the way, save only that the horses, by natural instinct, knew the trodden path. While they thus straggled apart, and he last, though the squires followed the right way, yet the king (to speak briefly) fell from his horse into Sisera's sleep, and thus bade farewell to his kingdom¹. In token whereof we may cite that proverb of Solomon's, "Woe to him that is alone when he falleth, for he hath not another to help him up." He lieth alone at Dunfermline, in a grave on the south side of the presbytery. While therefore we saw the multitude bewailing not only his sudden death but also the destitution of his kingdom, those alone suffered no tears to wet their cheeks who had clung most closely to his friendship and his benefits while yet he lived.

13. WILL OF THE GRISKIN²

(p. 51, A.D. 1244-)

ABOUT this time, as I think, there thus grew up in France, from small beginnings, a man of substance and of worthy memory. There lived in Norfolk a simple countryman who had many children, among whom he specially loved a little boy named William, for whom he set aside a pigling and the profits thereof, in order that, grown to manhood, he might provide for himself without burdening his parents, where-soever Fortune might favour him. The boy followed his father's bidding, and, leaving his fatherland, he hastened to France with naught else in his purse but the profits of that pig; for at home his playfellows were wont to call him the Boy of the Griskin. Now it came to pass, amidst the miseries

¹ The text seems a little corrupt here, but the main sense is plain enough. Alexander, as we know from other sources, fell down the cliff and broke his neck.

² Little pig.

LIFE IN THE MIDDLE AGES

and evils of those folk, he so advanced himself as to espouse an honourable matron, the widow of a man of some substance; with whom he had wealth and honour and a household of servants. This he did; and, being a man of diligence in all his works, he profited much, and was oftentimes summoned to business councils by the king and his great men. From henceforward, even as this honest man grew in substance, so did the fickle favour of the people grow with him; and, lest he should find his prosperity as false and perilous as adversity, he caused a most comely chamber to be built and painted within according to his own choice; whereof he committed the key to none save unto his own care, nor suffered any other, not even his wife, to enter therein. It was his wont, whensoever he returned from the courts of the great, forthwith to neglect all other business and enter into this secret chamber, wherein he would stay as long as he desired, and return in melancholy mood to his family. In process of time, as this custom became inveterate, all were amazed and agape to know what this might mean that they saw; wherefore, having taken counsel, they called all his friends together to solicit this wise man for the reason of his so strange behaviour in this chamber. At last, besieged and importuned by their complaints, he unlocked the door and called them all together to see his secret, the monument of his poverty thus set forth. Amid other ornaments of this chamber, he had caused a pigling to be painted and a little boy holding him by a string; above whose heads was written, in the English tongue—

Willé Gris, Willé Gris,
Thinche cwat you was, and qwat you es!

Which may be confirmed by that saying of St Gregory: "We can then keep our present state well, when we never neglect to consider what we were."

THE ARCHDEACON'S PURSE

14. THE ARCHDEACON'S PURSE

(p. 99, A.D. 1276.)

I WILL here insert, for mirth's sake also, a certain piece of evidence which I learned through Lord Robert of Roberstone, knight of the king of Scotland, and which he repeated before many trustworthy witnesses at my instance. That nobleman had a manor in Annandale, in the diocese of Glasgow, that was let out on farm to the peasants; who, being dissolute by reason of their wealth, and waxing wanton after their visits to the tavern, commonly sinned in adultery or incontinence, and thus frequently filled the Archdeacon's purse, for their relapses kept them almost perpetually on his roll. When therefore the lord of the manor demanded the rent due for the lands, they either pleaded their poverty or besought a respite, to whom this kindly and just man said. "Why do ye, more than all my other tenants, fail to pay your yearly rent? If it be too dear, I may lessen it, but if ye cannot till it, return it to me." Then one made answer jeering and laughing aloud, "Nay, my lord, the cause is not as thou sayest, but our frequent incontinence maketh us so poor that it falleth both upon ourselves and upon thee our lord." He therefore made answer "I make this law among you, that, whosoever shall thus sin in future, he shall quit my manor forthwith." The peasants, terrified at this strict penalty, amended their transgressions, busied themselves with field-labour, and waxed beyond all expectation in wealth, while they decreased from day to day in the Archdeacon's roll. When therefore one day he enquired why he found no man of that manor upon his roll, then they told him what manner of law the lord had made; whereat he was moved to indignation and, meeting the knight on the road, he asked with lofty brow: "Who, my lord Robert, hath constituted thee Archdeacon or Official?" "Nay, no man," quoth the lord. "Yet," replied he, "thou dost exercise such an office, in restraining thy tenants by penal statutes." "Nay," quoth the knight, "for the statute that I have made is of mine own land and not of men's sins; but thou, with thy ransom for sin, hast sucked out the revenues

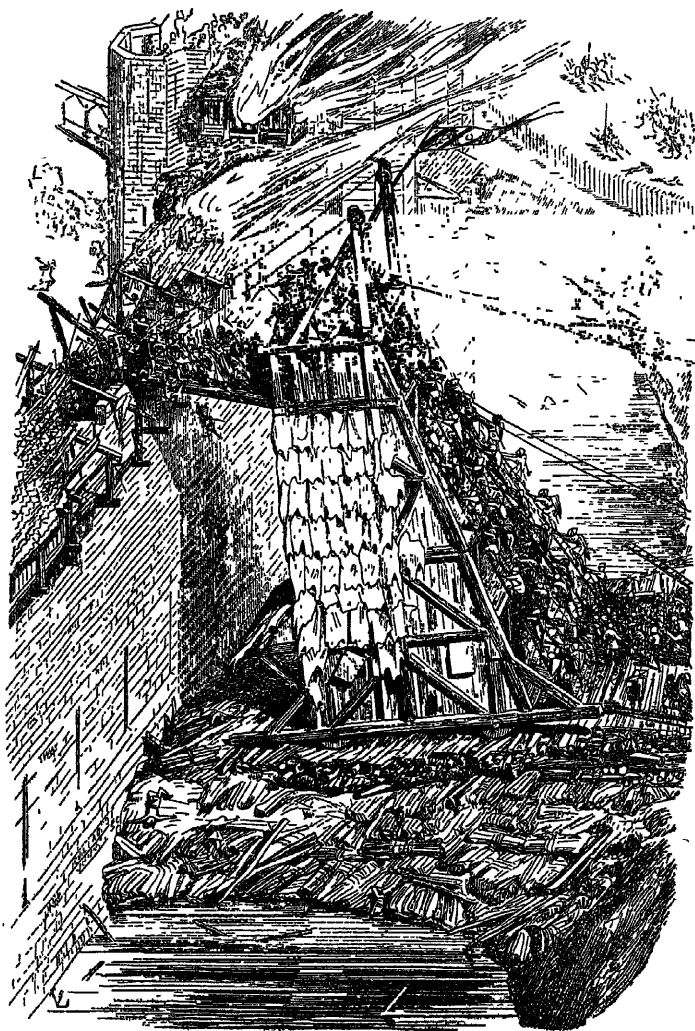
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of my farms; and now I see that thou wouldst reck little who should take the souls, if only thou couldst ever fill thy purse." With such words he silenced this exactor of crimes and lover of transgressions.

15. THE SIEGE OF CARLISLE

(p. 230, A.D. 1315.)

SOON afterwards in that same year, on the feast of St Mary Magdalene (July 22), the king of Scotland assembled all his forces and came to Carlisle, where he compassed the city round about and besieged it for ten days, treading all the crops under foot, ravaging the suburbs with the surrounding country, and burning throughout all those parts; moreover he drove a vast spoil of cattle to feed his army, from Allerdale and Coupland and Westmoreland. So on each day of the siege they made an assault against one of the three city gates, and sometimes at all three together, yet never with impunity. For we cast upon them from the wall javelins and arrows and stones, both then and at other times, in such multitude and number that they enquired one of the other, "Do stones increase and multiply, then, within these walls?" Moreover on the fifth day of the siege they set up an engine for casting stones hard by Trinity Church, where their king had pitched his tent; and they threw great stones without intermission against the wall and the Calden gate; yet with all this they did little or no harm to the townsfolk, save only that they slew one man. For we had seven or eight such engines in the city, without reckoning other engines of war, namely, the so-called springalds, for hurling long javelins, and slings on staves for casting stones, which wrought much terror and havoc among the besiegers. So in the meanwhile the Scots set up a great Belfry, like a tower, which far overtopped the town walls; whereupon the city carpenters, upon one tower against which this belfry must have been set if it had been brought up to the wall, built another tower of wood that overtopped that belfry. But the Scottish engine never came



BELFRY AND ASSAULT

LIFE IN THE MIDDLE AGES

against the wall; for when men dragged it on its wheels over the wet and miry ground, there it stuck fast with its own weight, nor could they draw it forward or harm us. Moreover the Scots had made long ladders, which they had brought with them for scaling the wall in divers places, and a sow for undermining the town wall if possible; but neither ladders nor sow availed them. Again, they made a multitude of fascines of corn and hay to fill the water-moat without the wall towards the east, that they might thus cross it dry-shod; and long wooden bridges that ran on wheels, which they hoped to draw so strongly and swiftly with ropes as to pass that broad moat. Yet, for all the time of this siege, neither could the fascines fill the ditch nor those bridges pass it, but their weight dragged them to the bottom. So on the ninth day, when all their engines were ready, they made a general assault on all the city gates and around the whole wall, manfully they came on, and our townsfolk also defended themselves like men; and likewise again on the morrow. Now the Scots here used that same wile whereby they had taken the castle of Edinburgh; for they caused the greater part of their host to make an assault upon the eastern part of the city, against the Franciscan Friary, that they might draw the defenders thither. Meanwhile the lord James Douglas, a bold and crafty knight, with others of the doughtiest and most active of that army, arrayed themselves on the west against the convents of the Canons and of the Friars Preachers, where the defences were so high and difficult of access that no assault was expected. There they reared long ladders whereby they climbed up; and they had a great host of archers who shot thick and close, that no man might show his head over the wall. Yet, blessed be God! they found such a welcome there that they and their ladders were flung to the earth; at which place and elsewhere around the wall some were slain and some taken and some wounded, yet on the English side, during that whole siege, save only that man of whom we have already spoken, there was but one man smitten with an arrow, and but few were even wounded. So on the eleventh day, to wit on the feast of St Peter *ad vincula*, either because they had tidings of an English host coming to raise the siege, or because they

THE SIEGE OF CARLISLE

despaired of further success, the Scots retired in confusion at daybreak to their own land, leaving behind all their engines of war aforesaid.

Jacques de Vitry studied at Paris, was ordained priest in 1210, and devoted himself to preaching by the advice of the Blessed Mary of Oignies, whose Life he also wrote. After her death in 1213 he preached the crusade first against the Albigensians and then against the Saracens. In 1214 he was elected Bishop of Acre, here he worked many years with his accustomed zeal, until at last, disheartened by the vices and failures of the crusaders, he resigned in or about 1227. Next year he was made a cardinal, and in 1239 elected Patriarch of Jerusalem; but the Pope was unwilling to spare him. He probably died in 1240. A passage from one of his letters, recording his enthusiasm for the new-born Franciscan Order, may be found in Sabatier's *St François d'Assise*, c. xiii, p. 261. His *Historia Occidentalis* and *Historia Orientalis* describe the age in language even more unfavourable than that of Roger Bacon and others quoted in this book; but the main human interest of his works is contained in the *Exempla*, or stories for the use of preachers, published by Prof. Crane for the Folk-Lore Society in 1890. A good many of these had already appeared anonymously among T. Wright's *Latin Stories*. Prof. Crane's edition, though of very great value, contains a good many misreadings which I have been able to amend by collations procured from the Paris MS. References are to folios of the MS. Lat. 17,509 of the Bibliothèque Nationale, and to pages in Crane's edition.

16. A VOLUNTARY NEBUCHADNEZZAR

(fol. 50, p. 21.)

I HAVE heard of one man who, wishing to do penance, even as he had likened himself to the beasts in sin, so he would make himself like to a beast in his food; wherefore he rose up at dawn and browsed on grass without touching it with his hands; and thus he would oftentimes eat daily. When therefore he had long lived thus, he began to ponder within himself, wondering of what Order of Angels he should be, seeing that he had done so great a penance; until at length it was answered to him through an angel: "By such a life thou hast not deserved to be of the Order of Angels, but rather of the Order of Asses." For, as saith St Bernard: "He who hath not lived as a man shall live as a beast"; so this man fell from discretion into presumption.

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17. THE STINGY KNIGHT

(fol. 123, p. 77.)

I HAVE heard how, when a certain covetous knight ate at the court of a certain noble, and asked after dinner for his mantle, which his servant had laid among the other garments, then, seeing that it could not at once be found, he began to revile him before all that stood by, saying: "Son of a ———, bring my mantle forthwith! knowest thou it not?" The servant, offended and moved to indignation, answered in all men's hearing, "Lord, I know it well; I have known it these seven years past; yet I have not yet been able to find it." The other knights hearing this, began to laugh and to scoff at this covetous knight, who was covered with confusion.

18. THE PILGRIMS' PERILS

(fol. 130, p. 130.)

I HAVE heard how certain abominable traitors, having received payment to furnish the pilgrims with victuals even to the port [of their destination], have stocked their ships with but little meat, and then, after a few days' journey, have starved their pilgrims to death and cast them ashore on an island, or (most cruel of all) have sold them as manservants or maidservants to the Saracens. I have known certain sailors bound for the city of Acre who had hired a ship from a man on condition that, if it perished on the sea, they should be bound to pay naught. When therefore they were within a short distance of the haven, without the knowledge of those pilgrims and merchants who were on board, they pierced the hold and entered into a boat while the ship was sinking. All the passengers were drowned; and the sailors, having laden their boats with the money and goods of the pilgrims, put on feigned faces of sadness when they drew near unto the haven. Therefore, having drowned the pilgrims and carried away their wealth, they paid not the hire of the ship, saying that they were not bound thereunto unless the vessel should come safe and sound to haven.

THE JEW AND THE BLASPHEMER

19. THE JEW AND THE BLASPHEMER

(fol. 134, p. 91.)

I HAVE heard that a certain Jew, playing at dice with a Christian and hearing how he blasphemed God when he lost, stopped his ears and rose from the game and fled, leaving his money on the table. For the Jews not only will not blaspheme God, but will not even listen to blasphemers. How wretched are those taverners who, for a little gain, suffer such blasphemous fellows, worse than Jews, to revile God in their houses! Would they not lose all patience and give rein to wrath, if as many injurious words were spoken against their wives as are spoken against the Blessed Virgin and the Saints? If such things were said of their parents or any one of their kinsfolk, as are said of God, they would not suffer it, but would cast the fellows forth from their houses.

20. WEDDING CUSTOMS

(fol. 145, p. 112)

IN some parts I have seen how, when women came home from the church after a wedding, others threw corn in their faces as they entered their house, crying in the French tongue, *plenté, plenté*, (which is being interpreted *abundance*); yet for all this, before the year was past, they remained poor and needy for the most part, and had no abundance of any goods whatsoever.¹

21. BROKEN VOWS

(fol. 147, p. 116)

I HAVE heard how certain folk promise much to God, binding themselves by vows which they afterwards violate to the detriment of their souls, and seeking to mock Him with

¹ Compare the Bologna statute of 1289, re-enacted four times within the next seventy years, against those who at weddings threw "snow, grain, paper-cuttings, sawdust, street-sweepings and other impurities" (Frati, *La Vita Privata di Bologna*, p. 50)

LIFE IN THE MIDDLE AGES

deceit. Such were a man and his wife who vowed to God that they would not drink wine save on solemn feast-days or when they had chanced to make a bargain. When therefore they had drunk water for a few days, then the man began to say to his wife: "We cannot abstain altogether to-day; let us make a bargain, that we may drink wine." So he sold his ass to the wife. Next day the wife said to her good man, "Buy back thine ass, and let us drink wine." Thus they bargained daily, that they might drink wine.

This fraud is committed by many. Such was the man who had vowed that he would eat no flesh save when he had guests; wherefore he invited guests for every day whereon men are wont to eat flesh. Such also are certain monks who, being forbidden to eat any flesh save hunted game, set hounds to chase their own home-bred swine through the monastery after the fashion of a hunting-party; and who thus, eating such flesh, fraudulently break their vows.

Collection des poètes français du M A., *La Chanson du Chevalier du Cygne et de Godefroid de Bouillon*, p. 26. Count Eustace of Boulogne married Ydain or Yde, daughter of the Knight of the Swan; she bore him three sons, Eustace, Godfrey and Baldwin, all of whom, in her extreme devotion, she always suckled at her own breast. Godfrey became Duke of Lorraine and (if he had willed it) King of Jerusalem; Baldwin, again, King of Jerusalem, while Eustace (through a misfortune here recounted) remained a mere Count.

22. A SUCKING-PRINCE

NEVER did Countess Yde, who was so good and fair, suffer that one of her three sons, for any cause whatsoever, should be suckled by waiting-woman or damosel; all three were suckled at her own breast. One day the lady went to hear mass at her chapel, and commended her three sons to one of her maidens. One of the three, awakening, wailed sore and howled; wherefore the maiden called a damosel and bade her suckle the child. Better had it been for her that she had been at Nivelles that day! The Countess came back and called the

A SUCKING-PRINCE

maiden: "Tell me now wherefore this child hath wetted his chin?" "My lady, he awoke but now, sore and loud were his cries, and I bade a damosel give him of her milk." When the Countess heard this, all her heart shook; for the pain that she had, she fell upon a seat; sore gasped her heart under her breast, and when she would have spoken, she called herself a poor leper!¹ Swiftly she flew, all trembling with rage, and caught her child under the arms: the child of tender flesh, she caught him in her hands, her face was black as a coal with the wrath that seethed within. . . . There on a mighty table she bade them spread out a purple quilt, and hold the child: there she rolled him and caught him by the shoulders, that he delayed not to give up the milk which he had sucked. Yet ever after were his deeds and his renown the less, even to the day of his death. The maiden stood more benumbed than a worm in winter-time: full dearly shall she pay this antic to her lady! nevertheless she fled before the bursting of the storm; not until August was past, and September in its train, only then did she dare to return to court and face the lady Countess. Then this saintly and devout countess laid the child in the place where he should be, and suckled him so long until she had laid him to rest, and all three were covered with her ermine mantle.

¹ *I e.* looked upon this defilement as hopeless.

LIFE IN THE MIDDLE AGES

"This Romance [of Flamenca]," writes Paul Meyer, "occupies a place by itself in Provençal literature . . . It is the creation of a clever man who wished to write a pretty book representing court life in the twelfth century on its most brilliant side. It was a romance of contemporary manners." Later critics, while dating the book rather from the early thirteenth century, have otherwise endorsed Meyer's verdict. Archambaut, Lord of Bourbon, married the good and beautiful Flamenca, against whom a jealous queen soon poisoned his mind. He therefore shut her up in a tower, which she left for moments only to go to church on Sundays and feast-days under the husband's own eye. The most handsome, liberal, learned and adventurous young knight of the day, Guillaume de Nevers, heard of this oppressed lady, to whom he vowed love and deliverance. By a series of ingenious subterfuges he first came to speech with her and then arranged a series of stolen interviews almost under the eyes of the jealous monster, and finally Flamenca was suffered to go free like other ladies, after swearing to her husband on the holy relics the subtly equivocal oath, "that she would keep herself henceforth as surely as he, the husband, had hitherto guarded her." The following passage (ll. 2232 ff.) describes how Guillaume came to stay at Bourbon under pretext of the famous medicinal baths which still exist there; and how, after talk with the host of his inn, Pierre Gui, he managed at last to catch sight of his lady's face at church.

23. THE COURSE OF TRUE LOVE

MEANWHILE came Master Pierre Gui into his room and cried: "Good Sir, I give you good morning and may God give you other good hours! but lo! how early you are arisen! There will be a long hour yet ere mass be sung; men delay it for my lady's sake, who would fain hear it."¹ Then Guillaume fetched a sigh and said: "Fair host, yet let us go straight-way to the church and pray there; then will we go forth and

¹ One of the worst misstatements in Abbot Gasquet's *Parish Life in Medieval England* is that on p. 7, "To 'Holy Mother Church' all were the same, and within God's house the tenant, the villen, and the serf stood side by side, with the overlord and master." English church synods enact that the great man alone might claim a sitting in church for his own; he alone might sit in the chancel among the clergy, he alone might be buried within the church. For him or his lady the whole parish had often to wait for hours before mass could be said; cf. the two very curious tales in La Tour-Landry (chaps. xxx and xxxi) referred to even in such a well-known book as Cutt's *Parish Priests and Their People*. "I haue herde of a knight & of a lady that in her youthe delited hem to rise late. And so they used longe, tilte many tymes that thei loste her masse, and made other of her parishes to lese it, for the knight was lorde and patron of the church, and therfor the preest durst not disobeye hym," etc., etc.

THE COURSE OF TRUE LOVE

desport ourselves till the bell shall ring for mass." Both went straight to the minster; but the thoughts of their hearts were far apart; for Guillaume had set his thoughts all on love, since he had no other mind; while the host thought of gain and how he would prepare his bath; for he doubted not but that his guest would bathe there on the morrow. Into the minster went Guillaume; and, kneeling before St Clement's altar, he prayed devoutly to God and our Lady St Mary, to St Michael and all his company, and all the Saints, that they would be his good helpers. Then said he three *Paternosters* and a little prayer that a holy hermit had taught him: a little prayer of the seventy-and-two names of God, even as men say it in Hebrew and Latin and Greek.¹ This prayer keepeth a man fresh and hearty in the love of God, that he may do nought but good every day: every man who sayeth it with faith shall find mercy from the Lord God; nor shall he ever come to an evil end if in his heart he trust therein or carry it written about him. When Guillaume had said this prayer, he took a psalter and opened it; a verse he found whereof he was right joyful, the verse, "I have loved, because the Lord will hear the voice of my prayer" [Ps. cxiv, 1. Vulg.]. "God knoweth my heart's desire!" cried he as he shut the book. Then he kept his eyes fixed on the ground; and, ere he left the church, he looked well at the lady's customary seat when she came thither; but little he dreamed how she was kept immured in that church!² Then said mine host, "Ey, sir! thou knowest to pray many prayers. We have here a rich and holy altar and many glorious relics; this you have doubtless seen well, since you know much of letters." "Host,

¹ On this Prof. Meyer notes (p. 316), "This petition still exists. It has been preserved in a collection of prayers often printed since the sixteenth century, both in Latin and French, under the name of Pope Leo III, and has become at last a chap-book. . . In this little book, which is still bought by country-folk, the prayer of the seventy-two names of God is preceded by this following rubric 'Here are the names of Jesus Christ; whosoever shall carry them upon him on a journey, whether by land or sea, shall be preserved from all kinds of dangers and perils, if he say them with faith and devotion.'"

² Cf. L. 1426 above "And there was neither knight nor clerk who could speak with her, for in the minster [Archambaut] made her sit in a dark, dark corner with walls on either side; and in front he had fixed a screen, tall and close, which reached well to her chin."

LIFE IN THE MIDDLE AGES

I know them well, but I am not therefore too lifted up in heart, that I can read my psalter aright, or sing a responsory, or say a lesson from a legendary." "My Lord, you are all the better for that. . . ."

With this they passed over the public square, and went forth into a garden where the nightingale took his disport for the sweet season's sake and for the spring green. Guillaume cast himself down in the cool shade beneath a fair apple-tree in flower. Mine host marked how all his colour was gone, and believed him to be pale with that sickness whereof he had spoken the other day; he prayed fast to God that He might restore his health and grant him his heart's desire. Guillaume heard only the nightingale, and not the host's prayers: for in truth Love bereaveth a man of sight and hearing, and maketh men to take him for a fool when he thinketh to have his best mind. Guillaume had nor sight nor hearing nor sense; with eyes unmoved and open mouth he felt a sweet pain pierce his heart with the song of that nightingale. . . . At last the gentle bird lowered his voice, and soon left his song when the bells began to ring for mass. "My Lord, it is high time to pray," quoth the host; "let us now go to mass." Guillaume heard him, for his thoughts were fled, and said, "Host, at thy good pleasure; for I would fain be at church ere the mass begin, that the crowd of folk hinder us not." "My Lord, we shall be in good time, and you and I will go into the choir; for I know somewhat of reading and chant, though not too plainly" "Ah, fair Host, may good hap befall thee! wherefore didst thou conceal this from me? For thy love I will sing there with thee, for I know to chant right well."

To the minster went they both, and met neither man nor woman but said to them, "God save thee!" for it is a custom at Eastertide that each man gladly greeteth his fellow. When they were come to the minster they entered together into the choir, where Guillaume could spy unseen through a little hole. There he watched and waited till Flamenca should come in, fully persuaded that he would know her at once. . . . There he waited with sore beatings of heart; for at each shadow that darkened the portal he thought to see the Lord Archambaut.

THE COURSE OF TRUE LOVE

The people took their places one by one; all were come in, and the third bell had sounded, when that fierce devil entered, haggard, staring, and shaggy; had he but borne a boar-spear in his hand, men might have taken him for those scarecrow figures that the peasants make with old rags to affright the wild boars in the mountains. By his side went his spouse, the fair Flamenca; yet she held her as far as might be from her husband, for the grief that he made her. Under the portal she stayed a moment and bent in deep humility; then, for the first time, did Guillaume de Nevers see her, so far as she might be seen . . . Then he lowered his gaze, for the lady was come into her closet, and knelt down. The priest sang *Asperges me*; Guillaume fell in at the *Domine*, and sang the whole versicle as it had never been sung before in that minster. Then the priest went out of the choir, and a villain bare the holy water: to Archambaut he went with his hand raised to sprinkle first. Then all the chant remained with Guillaume and mine host his helper; yet this hindered not but that his eyes dwelt still on the loophole in the closet screen. The chaplain sprinkled with the hyssop, casting the salt water, as best he could, straight upon Flamenca's head; who for her part made an opening right in the midst of her parted hair, that she might the better receive it. Her skin was white and tender as a babe's, her hair was fair and radiant; and the sun did her great courtesy, lighting straight down upon her at that moment with one of his golden rays. When Guillaume saw this fair sample of the rich treasure which Love held in store, then his heart laughed and leapt for joy, and he chanted forth the *Signum salutis*. . . . Then Nicholas, [the little clerk], took a breviary wherein were psalms, hymns, gospels, prayers, responses, versicles, and lessons, with which book he gave the *pax*¹ to Flamenca. As she kissed it, Guillaume saw her sweet vermeil mouth through the loophole, though one might have filled it with one's little finger. . . . When Nicholas had

¹ All exchanged the kiss of peace at the mass by applying their lips to the same object in turn—usually an engraved tablet of metal or marble, but here a book "It was introduced into England about the middle of the thirteenth century . . . But the use was almost extinct [about A.D. 1700] on account of the absurd contentions for precedence to which it gave rise" (Arnold and Addis, *Catholic Dictionary*, s.v. *Pax*).

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fulfilled his round, then Guillaume thought in his heart how he might get that book. . . . He hath found a subtle device. "It is good that I teach others in order that I may be taught myself: Clerk, wherewith giveth thou the *pax*? for thou shouldst give it with the Psalter, if it may be." "Yea, lord, so I do, and it is thus that I give it," and showed him the leaf and the place withal. Guillaume needed no more: he fell into prayer and kissed the book more than a thousand times: the whole world seemed his, and his cup of joy was wellnigh full; if only he might have kept his eyes on the page and on the loophole at the same moment, his bliss had been the greater. In these thoughts he dwelt so long, and took such delight in that contemplation, that he heard no word until the priest sang *Ite, missa est*; sore was he then abashed.

A GOOD CANON

Caesarius of Heisterbach was possibly born, and certainly educated, at Cologne, then one of the richest and busiest cities of Europe. After some inward struggles, he was at last converted by the story of the harvester-monks and the Virgin Mary (vol. iv, no. 16), upon which he entered the Cistercian monastery of Heisterbach in the Siebengebirge. In this house, then at the height of its efficiency and influence, he finally became prior and teacher of the novices, for whose special guidance he wrote his delightful *Dialogus Miraculorum*, one of the most intimate documents of the Middle Ages. He also wrote a few biographical and chronological treatises, and a book of Homilies. All these were apparently written between 1220 and 1235: the last dated event he mentions occurred in 1233. The *Dialogue* was printed five or six times between 1475 and 1605, the Homilies only once, in 1615. The author's faults are those of his time, his virtues of earnestness and vividness will perhaps be apparent even from these extracts. Father B. Tissier, reprinting him in 1662 in the *Bibliotheca Patrum Cisterciensium*, praises him as just the author to arouse the slumbering embers of strict Cistercian observance, and adds "yet it is lamentable that this authority, who has deserved so excellently of the Church, should now at last, after so many centuries, be called not only fabulous but even erroneous; whereas, if he be attentively read even by a jealous critic, nothing can be found in him strange to Catholic doctrine" (t. II, Preface). The modern view is rather that of Father Karl Unkel: "The almost scrupulous love of truth which Caesarius shows in his anecdotes is well known, but equally so is his great credulousness" (*Annalen des Historischen Vereins f. d. Niederrhein*, Heft 34, 1879, p. 5). The interlocutors in the *Dialogue* are Caesarius himself, and a novice whom he is instructing. I quote by volume and page from Joseph Strange's critical edition (Cologne, 1851).

24. A GOOD CANON

(Vol. I, p. 345.)

ENSRID, Dean of St. Andreas at Cologne, was born in that same bishopric, a simple and upright man and foremost in works of mercy. What his life was before his ordination to the priesthood or what he did in his youth I know not; but that mercifulness grew and increased with him I gather from his later acts. That he was of docile mind and eager to learn was shown by the effect; for even in his boyish years he laid so good a foundation of learning that, as I have heard from his own mouth, he became Master of the Schools as a mere youth, and instructed many both in word and in example, not only to learn but, what is more, to live well. Having been ordained priest, he received the rectory of a church at Siegburg,

LIFE IN THE MIDDLE AGES

a good parish that is rich in oblations, wherein he put his learning to effect. The pilgrim remained not without, for his door was open to the wayfarer. He was the father of widows, the consoler of orphans, the snibber of sinners. He nourished many scholars in his house; and, being of a dove-like simplicity, at that season when the cherries were ripe he said to his cellarer: "Good man, give the boys leave to climb the trees, that they may eat of cherries as many as they will and as they can; then thou needest to give them no other food; for there is no other food wherein they take such delight." This he said not as a niggard, but from the abundant kindness of his heart. When therefore they had done this for some days, and the freedom given to the boys pleased their boyish hearts, the cellarer said to Ensfrid: "Of a truth, my lord, unless these boys eat other food also, they will soon fail": wherefore he straightway suffered himself to be persuaded. After this he was made canon of the church of St Andreas in Cologne; and not long after, for the goodness of his life, he was raised to the Deanery; where, although he was of blameless life and strong in the virtue of chastity, yet was he specially fervent in works of mercy. In the parish of St Paul, which adjoins the church of St Andrew, there was no poor widow whose cottage he knew not, and whom he failed to visit with his alms. So much bread was given from his table to those who begged from door to door; so much money passed from his hands into Christ's treasury—that is, into the hands of the poor—that many who knew his annual revenues marvelled thereat. Now he had a kinsman, Frederick by name, a canon of the same church, who held the office of cellarer, this man was wont oftentimes to rebuke his uncle for his indiscreet liberality, and the uncle in turn blamed him for his too great niggardliness; for they kept house in common, and therefore Frederick was much grieved that the Dean was wont to give secretly to the poor whatsoever he could seize. It came to pass that this Frederick, having many and great swine in virtue of his office, slew them and made them into flitches which he hung in the kitchen to be kept until the time appointed, these the Dean would oftentimes consider, and, grudging sore that they should hang there, knowing at the same time that he could not or dared

A GOOD CANON

not beg any part thereof from his nephew, he contrived a holy fraud, a pious fraud, a fraud worthy of all memory! So often as he knew that no man was in the kitchen, he would steal secretly thither, and sometimes seize the occasion to send the servants forth. Then would he mount the ladder and cut from the fitches on the side next to the wall until all were wasted away almost to the midst; but the forepart he left untouched, that none might mark how the rest had been taken. This he did for many days, distributing the flesh thus cut away to widows, and poor folk, and orphans. In brief, the theft of this household property was at last discovered, the thief was sought and found without delay. The cellarer raged, the Dean held his peace; and when the other complained that he had lost the sustenance of the brethren and the stock of a whole year, the holy man sought to soothe him with such words as he could, saying: "Good kinsman, it is better that thou shouldst suffer some little want than that the poor should die of hunger. The Lord will indeed reward thee." At which words the other was soothed and held his peace. Another time as he went to St Gereon's (methinks, on the feast-day of that martyr,) a poor man followed him with importunate cries; and he, having nought to give him, bade the cellarer who followed him to go on for a little space: then, retiring apart to the corner hard by the church of St Mary, the Blessed Mother of God, where bishops are wont to give indulgences to the people on Palm Sunday, having there no other garment which he could take off, in the sight of the poor man he loosened his breeches and let them fall; and the other, raising them from the ground, went his way rejoicing. The man of God would fain have hidden this virtuous act, but at God's will it was set upon a candlestick as an example to posterity, as I shall here relate. When he was come from St Gereon's and was sitting by the embers, seeing that he raised not up the skirt of his fur cloak to warm himself according to his wont, the aforesaid Frederick said unto him: "Raise your cloak and warm yourself": for it was cold and he was an old man: to which he replied. "There is no need": and Frederick: "Verily I believe that ye have no breeches," for he read this in the shamefaced colour of his countenance. At last he

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confessed that they had fallen from him, saying no word of his charity. Whereupon his nephew laughed and published the matter abroad. ¶ *Novice*. We read of no such charity in the acts of St Martin; it was a greater thing to give his breeches than cut his cloak in half. ¶ *Monk*. For these and other like deeds some said that they had never read of a man who was so compassionate, so merciful, and so pitiful to the poor. . . . On a certain solemn festival when the lord Adolf, Dean of the cathedral church and afterwards Archbishop, had invited him to his feast, Ensfrid refused, saying that he had noble guests. So, when mass had been said and the blessed man was hastening homewards, then Gottfried, his fellow-canon and notary of the cathedral deanery (who told me this story himself) looked forth from the window of the upper chamber of the clergy-house and saw many poor following him, whereof some were halt and others blind; and since they could not cross the stepping-stones which there divide the square, he, aged and decrepit as he was, was giving his hand to each in turn. Forthwith the clerk called his master to the window and said. "Behold, lord, these are the noble guests whom our friend the Dean said that he had invited"; and both were no little edified. I myself have seen another like work of his mercy. On the anniversary of the lord Bruno, Archbishop of Cologne, when all the chapters of the conventual churches flocked together to the church of St Pantaleon which this same Bruno had built, after mass had been said for his soul, and the priors as had been ordained were entering the refectory, I know not how many poor folk followed the lord Ensfrid to the very refectory door. When therefore the refectorer would have admitted him and cast out the poor, he was moved with indignation and cried. "I will not enter to-day without them": for, as a most prudent man, he knew that the poor are God's friends and door-keepers of heaven, and he kept well in his memory that counsel of the Son of God. "Make unto you friends of the mammon of iniquity, that when you shall fail they may receive you into everlasting dwellings." Hence one day when he had been set to stand beside the relics and to warn those who came in to give alms for the building of that church whereof he was then custos,

A GOOD CANON

he spake to the people in these words: "Good folk, ye see well what noble buildings stand here around you! ye will do well indeed in giving your alms to them, yet ye expend them better and more safely on the poor." This sermon of his was heard by Frederick of blessed memory, our fellow monk, who at that moment entered the church of St Andreas with certain knights, and who afterwards was often wont to repeat it to me. . . . A certain citizen of Cologne, named Lamprecht, was his familiar friend and near neighbour; who, sitting one day with the aforesaid Gottfried the notary, as they spake together of the lord Ensfrid's almsgivings, said in my hearing: "I will tell you how he treated me. One day he had invited me and my wife to sup with him. We sat down to table with him and waited long in expectation that some meat would be set before us, for nought was there but dry bread; then I, knowing well his ways, called one of the servants and whispered in his ear: "Tell me, good fellow, shall we have anything to eat?" The man answered: "We have nothing; for a goodly repast had been prepared for you, but my master entered the kitchen before the hour of supper and divided among the poor all that we had prepared, in spite of all our cries." Then I smiled and sent the same servant to mine own house, and he brought enough meat to suffice for all our guests. Another day I came into his kitchen and saw I know not how many geese roasting on the spit; then said I in my heart: "Of a truth this Dean nourishes his household well!" but when the geese were roasted he himself came in and cut them down, and dividing them plate by plate, sent them round to the widows and poor even unto the last fragment. Oftentimes geese and hens were sent to him both for his office of Dean and for a personal gift by the many who respected him, knowing his charity; and, because he was most pitiful, therefore whatsoever he would send of them to his brethren or other neighbours, he sent it not alive but dead, that they might eat it forthwith. So great, as I have often said, was his compassion towards the poor that sometimes he did that which seemed scarce just according to the judgment of men. A certain citizen of Cologne, as one of the priests of St Andreas related to me, loved his own wife little and afflicted her often,

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wherefore she stole much money from him. When therefore her husband accused her and she stoutly denied, then, fearing to be caught by him, she cast the money into the cesspool; after which, grieving at that which she had done, she came to the Dean and told him, under seal of confession, of her theft and its cause; and methinks that the holy man must have persuaded her to bring forth the money to her husband; but she, for that she had denied the deed to him with an oath, dared not do thus, fearing lest he should afflict her all the more on this account. The Dean therefore answered her: "If I may get the money secretly, wilt thou that I give it to the poor?" "Yea," said she, "that is all my desire." Wherefore, a few days afterwards, the Dean said to this citizen: "Wilt thou give me leave to cleanse thy cesspool and take thence whatsoever the Lord shall give me there?" He, knowing the Dean to be a holy man, and thinking moreover that God had revealed something to him, gave him leave. The place was purged, the money was found, and within a few days was spent among the poor by the hands of this man of God.

¶ *Novice.* Herein might some detractor fix his tooth.

¶ *Monk.* Three things would seem to excuse him here from sin: first that this same money, as it was the husband's, so also was it the wife's: secondly, that it was already lost and might not be brought forth on account of the seal of confession: thirdly, that he gave it to the poor. To this may be added lastly, that it was charity which impelled him to the deed; for priests are wont oftentimes to give wives leave that they may take from their covetous and merciless husbands and distribute among the poor. The Dean did one more deed which was yet more disputable. Having nought to eat, he entered the bakery of the brethren, and seeing there the loaves set in order upon a table to be borne away, he asked the baker whose was this or that loaf, and when the man had answered him in each case as the truth was, he bade that the loaves of those whom he knew to be rich should be brought to his home, saying: "They are in abundance, and I have nought to eat."

¶ *Novice.* How should this deed be excused? ¶ *Monk.* Many things are lawful to the saints which are unlawful to such as are no saints, for where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is

A GOOD CANON

liberty." Whence the Author saith: "have charity, and do whatsoever thou wilt." . . . Now when his failing body and his ripe old age warned him that the day of his death was near, lest any earthly possession should burden his poor spirit on its journey to its heavenly home, he sold his house and divided its price—not among his kinsfolk, not among his friends, but with his own hands among Christ's poor; for he knew that his fellow-canons, however faithful to his face, would be less faithful after his death. When, therefore, the man who had bought his house, a certain priest and canon of the same church named Conrad, said unto him: "Lord, I would fain have my house," then Ensfrid answered in all simplicity: "Good Conrad, I am a decrepit old man: my day of death is at hand: wait a little while and ye shall have it. Where wouldest thou have me dwell in the meanwhile?" Conrad, as a good man, made a virtue of necessity and awaited his death in all patience. The blessed man was so pitiful that oftentimes, as he sat in the porch of his church and watched the poor creeping up laden with moss which they had collected in the woods, he himself would buy it, not that it was of any use to him, but that he might free the poor from their labour. . . . One day, passing by the schools and hearing the cries of a certain canon¹ who had committed a grievous fault and was being held by four scholars to be scourged, he rushed into the schools all breathless, and coming up like a lion, brandishing his staff (as I myself saw) against the master of the schools and his fellow-canon, he released the boy from his hand, saying: "What dost thou, tyrant? Thou art set here to teach the scholars, not to slay them." At which word the other was confounded and held his peace. The following story will declare how patient he was. One day as he sat in the church according to his wont, between nones and vespers as I believe, a wretch named Scothus, who was oftentimes drunken and utterly unworthy of the honour of the priesthood, found him alone there, and seizing him by the hood drew out his knife and threatened him, saying: "Give me somewhat, or I will slay thee." By God's providence a certain young and lusty canon came up at that moment and dragged this

¹ Boys were frequently promoted to canonries, see vol. 1, nos. 29 and 55.

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Scothus roughly from him; then, when he would have beaten him as one whom he judged worthy of death, this meekest of men withheld him, saying: "Be not troubled, brother! beware lest thou hurt him, for he did this in jest." He never returned evil for evil, for the simplicity of a dove reigned in him; but, though he was so exceeding merciful, as I have said, yet he burned with the zeal of justice. One day he met the abbess of the holy Eleven Thousand Virgins before her went her clerks, wrapped in mantles of grey fur like the nuns; behind went her ladies and maid-servants, filling the air with the sound of their unprofitable words; while the Dean was followed by his poor folk that besought him for alms. Wherefore this righteous man, burning with the zeal of discipline, cried aloud in the hearing of all. "Oh, lady Abbess, it would better befit your profession, it would better adorn your religion, that ye, like I, should be followed not by buffoons but by poor folk!" Whereat she was much ashamed, not presuming to answer so worthy a man. So great was his love of justice that one day when some other spake in his hearing of the evil lives of the clergy, he answered abruptly: "It is all one howsoever they live!" which was as if to say: "A good tree cannot spring from an evil root": for he knew that there were few clergy who had entered by canonical ways: few who were not either blood-clerks (that is, foisted in by their kinsfolk); or jester-clerks (that is, such as had been thrust in by the power of great folks); or simoniacs who had crept in through money or through worldly services. . . . ¶ *Novice.* How is it that thou tellest no miracle of so holy a man? ¶ *Monk.* Who was greater than John the Baptist? Yet we read not that he worked any miracles, as the Gospel telleth of Judas who betrayed the Lord.¹ Know therefore that to some who now work miracles in Christ's name He will say in the end: "I know you not whence you are: depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity." All miracles are not of the *essence* of holiness, but only *signs* of holiness.

¹ Mark vi, xiii

A SIMPLE SOUL

25. A SIMPLE SOUL

(*Ib.* p. 357.)

THERE lived in our days, in the church of St Gereon the Martyr in Cologne, a certain canon called Werinbold, of noble race and great wealth of church revenues; yet was he so simple-minded that he could not comprehend the sum-total of anything, except so far as it could be understood from the evenness or oddness of the number. Once upon a time, therefore, having many fitches hanging in his kitchen, and fearing lest any should be stolen from him, he went in and counted them thus: "Here is a fitch, and there is his wife! here is a fitch, and there is his wife!" and so forth. When one of these had been stolen by a wicked servant, then this Werinbold, entering once more and numbering them as he had done aforetime, found the number odd, and cried out: "I have lost one of my fitches!" to whom his servants answered smiling: "Master, it shall soon be found." So they led him forth; and, taking away another, made the number even. When therefore he had been brought again into his kitchen and counted them afresh, finding the number even, he said to them with much cheerfulness: "Lo now, masters, I might have held my peace too long!"

When his servants would fain fare sumptuously, they would say to him: "Master, wherefore do ye not care for yourself, for ye are exceeding sick?" He then would answer: "How know ye that, good fellows?" and they: "We see it well in your hairs, for they are swollen." Then, putting him to bed, they would prepare delicate meats as for his infirmity, and make good cheer for themselves. A certain country-fellow, wily and cunning, hearing of his simplicity, feigned to be an hereditary serf of his from ancestor to ancestor, and said: "I cannot suffer, my lord, that your goods should be thus wasted or neglected, for I am your serf. It is meet that I should serve your worship and guard your goods with all faithfulness." In short, all things were committed to him: he then would sit drinking over the fire with the servants by night, when his master had gone to sleep. One night he let a wandering

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minstrel in, whose merry fiddle awakened the sleeping canon. When, therefore, he arose from his bed, the servant met him and asked: "Where will ye go, lord?" He answered: "I hear an excellent merry tune, but I know not where it is." Then answered the servant "Return to your bed; it is the monks of Deutz who sing to their organs."¹ . . . ¶ *Novice*. Methinks that this man was rather foolish than simple-minded, for simplicity should not be without prudence. ¶ *Monk*. Prudence consisteth in warding against evil, in which virtue he was not altogether lacking; wherefore by Divine Providence he was made cellarer of the church of St Gereon, whose revenues are many and abundant, and we may say of him as it is written of the Holy Joseph: "Neither knew he any other thing, but the bread which he ate"; nor even that fully; therefore the Lord, who loveth simplicity, fulfilled his defects and blessed everything whereto he put his hand. Yet one day he entered the church-barn and saw many cats running hither and thither among the corn; whereupon he could scarce contain himself until the hour of Chapter. Then, falling at the feet of the Dean, he gave up his keys and begged to be absolved from his office. When therefore the Dean of the brethren said: "Good Master Werinbold, what ails you? why do ye do thus?" he answered: "For I cannot suffer to see the waste of this church." "What waste?" said they: and he: "This day I saw your barn full of cats, who will surely devour your whole store." When they had enquired further of him, even though they told him how cats devour not the store, but rather cleanse it," yet even so they could scarce prevail on him to take back the keys. For they had learned by experience that the Lord blessed them for his simplicity's sake. . . . ¶ *Novice*. Such men would not be chosen for cellarers in our day. ¶ *Monk*. Times are changed, and men are changed with them; yet even in our days it cometh to pass oftentimes that houses of religion profit in worldly things under simple-minded prelates and officials, and fail under wily men trained in the school of the world.

¹ The Rhine separates Cologne from Deutz.

THE CASTLE OF LOVE

Rolandino of Padua was born in 1200, studied at Bologna, and became a renowned notary in his native city. He began his Chronicle in 1260, and read it publicly two years later, with great applause, before the University of Padua. He died in 1276. The following extract is from bk 1, chap. xiii (Muratori, *Scriptt Ital.* vol. viii, p. 180).

26. THE CASTLE OF LOVE

IN the year 1214 Albizzo da Fiore was Podesta of Padua, a prudent and discreet man, courteous, gentle, and kindly; who, though in his government he was wise, lordly, and astute, yet loved mirth and solace. In the days of his office they ordained at Treviso a Court of Solace and Mirth, whereunto many of Padua were called, both knights and footmen. Moreover, some dozen of the noblest and fairest ladies, and the fittest for such mirth that could be found in Padua, went by invitation to grace that Court. Now the Court, or festivity, was thus ordered. A fantastic castle was built and garrisoned with dames and damsels and their waiting-women, who without help of man defended it with all possible prudence. Now this castle was fortified on all sides with skins of vair and sable, sendals, purple cloths, samites, precious tissues, scarlet, brocade of Bagdad, and ermine. What shall I say of the golden coronets studded with chrysolites and jacinths, topaz and emeralds, pearls and pointed headgear, and all manner of adornments wherewith the ladies defended their heads from the assaults of the beleaguers? For the castle itself must needs be assaulted; and the arms and engines wherewith men fought against it were apples and dates and muscat-nuts, tarts and pears and quinces, roses and lilies and violets, and vases of balsam or ambergris or rosewater, amber, camphor, cardamums, cinnamon, cloves, pomegranates, and all manner of flowers or spices that are fragrant to smell or fair to see. Moreover, many men came from Venice to this festival, and many ladies to pay honour to that Court; and these Venetians, bearing the fair banner of St Mark, fought with much skill and delight. Yet much evil may spring sometimes from good beginnings; for, while the Venetians strove in sport with the Paduans, contending who should first press into the castle

LIFE IN THE MIDDLE AGES

gate, then discord arose on either side; and (would that it had never been!) a certain unwise Venetian who bare the banner of St Mark made an assault upon the Paduans with fierce and



A CASTLE OF LOVE

From a carved ivory casket of the thirteenth century
(A. Schultz, *Höfisches Leben*, Band 1, S. 449).

wrathful mien; which when the Paduans saw, some of them waxed wroth in turn and laid violent hands on that banner, wherefrom they tore a certain portion; which again provoked the Venetians to sore wrath and indignation. So the Court

THE CASTLE OF LOVE

or pastime was forthwith broken up at the bidding of the other stewards of the court and of the lord Paolo da Sermedaula, a discreet Paduan citizen of great renown who was then King of the Knights of that court, and to whom with the other stewards it had been granted, for honour's sake, that they should have governance and judgment over ladies and knights and the whole Court. Of this festival therefore we might say in the words of the poet, "The sport begat wild strife and wrath; wrath begat fierce enmities and fatal war." For in process of time the enmity between Paduans and Venetians waxed so sore that all commerce of trade was forbidden on either side, and the confines were guarded lest anything should be brought from one land to the other: then men practised robberies and violence, so that discord grew afresh, and wars, and deadly enmity.

Matthew Paris, monk of St Albans and Historiographer Royal to Henry III, is unquestionably the greatest of the English medieval chroniclers, and has few rivals in Europe during this period. He was a man of many and various accomplishments—diplomatist, mathematician, poet, theologian, and artist, though the best authorities ascribe to other hands nearly all the beautiful drawings which illustrate the MSS of his works. Far more extracts would have been given here, but that a complete translation of his Chronicle, uninspired but otherwise satisfactory, has been published in Bohn's Antiquarian Library. He died in or about the year 1259.

27. AN OXFORD BRAWL

IN this year [1238] the pope's legate came to Oxford and was received as was fitting with the highest honours; he was lodged in the house of the canons, that is, the Abbey of Oseney. Now the clerks of the University sent him before dinner-time an honourable present of meat and drink: and after dinner, they came to his lodging to salute him and pay him a visit of respect. But when they came to his lodging, a certain Italian doorkeeper, with most unbecoming and deplorable levity, holding the door just ajar, and raising his voice as these Romans are wont to do, cried: "What seek

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ye here?" To which the clerks replied: "We seek the lord legate, for we would fain salute him"; believing naturally that they should receive honour in return for honour. But the porter railed at them, refusing rudely, and with proud and evil words, to admit any one. The clerks, seeing this, forced their way in by an impetuous rush. Then the Romans, wishing to drive them back, began to smite them with rod and with fist; and while these contending parties exchanged abuse and blows, it fell out that a certain poor Irish chaplain was standing at the kitchen door, begging importunately enough, in God's name, for a morsel of food, like a poor half-starved wretch that he was. Now the legate, to guard against poison, which he feared greatly, had appointed his own brother, as one whom he could trust, to the post of chief cook; which man now hearing the poor chaplain, yet in his wrath not waiting to hear him to the end, cast into his face hot water from the caldron in which fat flesh was seething. At this outrage, a certain clerk from the Welsh marches cried aloud: "For shame, why endure we thus far?" and, drawing the bow which he bare (for, as the tumult waxed hotter, some of the clerks had caught up such arms as lay to hand) he smote the cook (whom the clerks called in jest Nabuzardan, that is, the chief cook)¹ with an arrow through the body. The man sank dead to the ground, and a tumult arose. The legate, dismayed, caught up his canonical cope and fled to the church tower, locking all the doors behind him . . . The infuriated clerks ceased not to seek him even in the secret recesses of the private chambers, shouting as they went: "Where is that usurer, that simoniac, robber of revenues and insatiate of money, who, perverting our king and subverting our kingdom, plunders us to fill strangers' coffers?" While the fugitive legate, in his hiding-place, heard still the shouts of such as sought him, then he said within himself in the words of the poet: "When madness hath its course, yield to the course of madness": and, bearing all in patience, he became as a man that heareth not, and that hath no reproofs in his mouth. . . . So when, as we have said, he had with difficulty crossed the river with few followers, since the ferry was small and the

¹ ² Kings xxv, 8, but both A.V. and Douay translate this as a military office.

AN OXFORD BRAWL

rest of his men hid in the abbey, then came he breathless and troubled to the king's presence, and set forth all things in order as they had happened both to the king and those that sat with him, with tears and sobs that interrupted his speech, complaining most bitterly of those things. The king was amazed, and, moved to great pity by his lamentable speech, he sent Earl de Warenne with a troop of armed men to Oxford to rescue the Romans from their hiding-places, and to arrest the scholars, among whom Master Odo, Doctor of Laws, was truculently seized and cast ignominiously into chains, with thirty others, in the castle-dungeons of Wallingford, which is hard by Oxford. Meanwhile the legate, having broken the snare and escaped, called together certain bishops and laid Oxford under an interdict, and excommunicated all those who had consented to so enormous a misdeed. Afterwards these scholars were carried to London in tumbrils, like robbers, at the legate's command, where again they were cast into prison and bonds and strict guard, and despoiled of their revenues, and smitten with excommunication. The legate, though his purpose had been to ride northwards, turned now and came back to London, and scarce dared to dwell in the royal hostel of the bishop of Durham, where he was commonly lodged. The king, for his part, sent word to London that the mayor and all the citizens should keep that legate by a sure and armed watch, as the apple of their eye. Meanwhile the legate, in virtue of his authority from the Pope, commanded straitly that the archbishop of York and all the bishops of England should assemble in London to treat in common of the perilous state of the church and clergy on the 17th of May; on which day they came together, and the bishops sought earnestly how they might safeguard the clerical status of the University as scarce less precious than the church itself; to whom the legate consented, saving always the honour of the Roman church, lest it should be said to his dishonour that he who had come to reform the clergy and church was rather deforming them. At length the bishops and all the clergy present pleaded that the riot had been begun by his own household, and that the scholars had at last been worsted in the struggle. "Already," said they, "many of them are

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cast into prison at your will; and the rest, obeying your commands, are ready humbly to submit in any place not more than three days' journey from Oxford. Ye should therefore lean to mercy at the petition of so many and so grave men. At length it was agreed that the legate should forgive them on these terms following: that all the scholars there assembled, attended by the bishops on foot, should go themselves on foot from St Paul's Cathedral, which was about a mile distant from the legate's lodging: then, as soon as they came to the house of the bishop of Carlisle, from that spot onward they should advance even to the legate's lodging without their copes and mantles, ungirt and barefooted, begging humbly for pardon, whereupon they should have pardon and mercy: and thus it was done.

From a thirteenth century MS. printed in *Reliquiae Antiquae*, vol. I, p. 162.

28. A RHYME OF FAIR LADIES

Ici commence la geste des dames.

WHAT shall we say of the ladies when they come to feasts? Each marks well the other's head; they wear bosses like horned beasts, and if any have no horns, she is a laughing stock for the rest. Their arms go merrily when they come into the room; they display their kerchiefs of silk and cambric, set on their buttons of coral and amber, and cease not their babble so long as they are in the bower. There they send for brewis¹ and sit down to dine, they put aside their wimples to open their mouths; if a wanton squire would enter at that moment, he could not well fail of privy mockery. Two nimble valets have their hands full with serving all these ladies, each to her own fancy: the one is busy fetching their meats from the kitchen, and the other drawing good wine from the buttery. When therefore they have dined at their good leisure, then they herd together to babble in secret; one tickles the other's heart, if by chance she may entice some secret from thence. Then, when dinner-hour is come, they descend

¹ Pottage.

A RHYME OF FAIR LADIES

the steps and trip daintily into the hall hand in hand; then doth a man see so many of the fair creatures together, that he may not pass the day without sighing for them! But when they are set down to meat, they touch no morsel of all that is spread before them; right coyly they sit there and show their faces, she whom men most gaze upon is she who bears away the prize. When therefore they have shown all that is in front, then they find some occasion to sweep the bench-backs, that men may see the costly workmanship on their backs, which was hidden in front. When they arise from table (I say not from meat, for they have eaten but little and yet have well dined) then go they to their bower to entertain each other with subtleties of needlework whereof they love to talk; then comes up the frilled work and the open-work, the German and the Saracen work, the pinched work, the scalloped and the wool-work, the perroun¹ and the melice and the diaper-work, the rod-work, and the peynet and the gernetée; nor is the double samite forgotten, nor do they fail to handle again and again the redener-work. She who knows most of these things shall be their lecturess, to whom the rest hearken without sluggardy, none sleeps here as they do at mass, for all are cheerful champions in these lists of vanity. Then go they homewards, back from the feast; and forthwith they put away their sleek and comely heads, she who was even now so fresh, becomes so restive that the merchant repents the day when he bought this beast. Then they play the folly that costs so dear; for, when they are bidden again to some feast, then for a long while before they are busy unravelling their wreaths and plaited tresses, to make all new again. Thus all their heraldry is changed, both field and device: here they put beads where spangles were before, they cut up a lion and make thereof a soaring eagle, or pare a swan into the form of a hare couchant. But, however well their attire be fashioned, when the feast is come it pleases them nought; so great is their envy now and so high grows their pride, that the bailiff's daughter counterfeits the lady.

Ici finit la geste des dames.

¹ Several of these Anglo-Norman terms of millinery are difficult to identify nowadays.

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St Douceline, born about 1214 of a rich merchant family at Digne in Provence, was sister to the celebrated Franciscan preacher Hugues de Digne, for whom see Joinville (§ 657 ff), Miss A. Macdonell's *Sons of Francis*, and Salimbene's chronicle. At the age of twenty-six, she founded at Marseilles, and under the direction of the Franciscans, a house of Béguines which was spared when Clement V and John XXII abolished the majority of such houses, and which only perished of inanition in 1407. Douceline died 1 September, 1274; her worship began from that moment among the people; an office was composed for her day, the tomb became a great resort of pilgrims, and (like many other saints) she enjoyed every honour but that of papal canonization. Her *Life*, published with a translation by Abbé Albanès in 1879, was written in Provençal probably by Douceline's disciple and friend Philippine de Porcellet, sister to the only Frenchman whose life was spared in the Sicilian Vespers.

29. SAINT DOUCELINE

(Pp. 10, 50, 73, 80, 56, 186, 82, 196.)

[EVEN while she was yet in the world] she wore in secret a shirt of pigskin, hard and rough, which galled her to the quick, so that she was oftentimes unable to remove it, and when it was taken off it left her body all torn and covered with sores. It befell one day that this shirt was so ingrown into her flesh as to defy all her efforts to tear it away; whereupon she was fain to call her handmaid, in whom she put her trust, and who drew off the shirt by main force, tearing her flesh with the hide. She was wont to gird her waist so straitly with a knotted cord, that worms would oftentimes breed where the knots entered into her flesh. Moreover, she wore an iron hoop night and day. . . over which she showed fair and choice garments, as though she loved gay stuffs. She lay, for penance' sake, on a little straw in the corner of her room; and, lest she should rest in sleep, she bound a cord above her bed with one end, and with the other round her own waist; so that, whensoever she stirred, the cord would drag and awake her. Then would she rise forthwith to say her matins with all devotion, and to read. . . Such then was her life so long as she lived in the world. . .

[During her life as a Béguine] she ordained the avoidance not only of all familiarity with men, but also of all speech and interchange of glances; and this she demanded strictly not

SAINT DOUCELINE

only from her spiritual daughters but of all who would live under her direction. For herself, she knew no man's face; and if she saw one of her sisterhood raise her head to look upon any man, even though he were a near relation, then she would rebuke her sharply, and chastise her with severity. It befell one day that a girl of the house, who was but seven years old, had looked upon some men who were there at work. When the holy mother knew this, she beat her so shrewdly that the blood ran down her ribs, saying meanwhile that she would sacrifice her to God. . . .

She could not hear speak of God or St Francis, or the Saints, but that she fell forthwith into a trance. Oftentimes she was caught up into so high contemplation, that she remained rapt the whole day long; in which state she felt things beyond all human sense, knowing and perceiving naught of what was done around her. This was oftentimes proved, and in manifold ways, by all manner of persons who, seeing her thus ravished, thrust or drew her violently, and even did her much harm, yet without being able to make her stir. Sometimes she was raised up in the air, leaning on nothing nor touching the earth with her feet, save with her two big toes alone, and she was raised so high, held up in the air by the virtue of her marvellous trance, that there was a whole handbreadth betwixt her and the ground, so that, while she stayed thus, we oftentimes kissed the soles of her feet. . . . The first time that king Charles [of Anjou] saw her thus ravished, he desired to prove the truth (and he was then but Count of Provence, and thus he proved her): he let men bring much molten lead and cast it boiling upon her bare feet, under his own eyes, and she felt it not. Wherefore the king felt such love towards her that he made her godmother to a child of his. Nevertheless at her awakening she felt great pain in her feet, and anguish that might scarce be endured. . . .

When men brought her presents of living fowls, then she would not suffer them to be killed, but would disport herself a space with them, speaking meanwhile of our Lord Who made them; then her mind would rise to God and she would let them go, saying, "Praise now the Lord Who created thee!" . . . As she sat at meat, if anyone brought her a flower, a bird,

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a fruit, or any other thing that gave her pleasure, then she fell straightway into an ecstasy, and was caught up to Him Who had made these fair creatures. . . . When one read before her at meat, if some devout word came in the lesson, she was ravished forthwith even as she sat at table, and could eat no more. If she heard an air which aroused her devotion, or pleased her, then she was forthwith drawn to her Lord; so that she could at last support no sweet sound, and scarce any song, not even the singing of birds, but that she was rapt beside herself. One day she heard a lonely sparrow sing, whereupon she said to her companions, "How lonely is the song of that bird!" and in the twinkling of an eye she was in an ecstasy, drawn up to God by the bird's voice. . . .

On the day after her death, the body was removed to the Franciscan church for burial.

The whole people flocked together and rushed upon the sacred body with incredible ardour, so that the guards could by no means keep them at arm's length. Before the procession had reached the church, three tunics had been cast upon her, one after the other, for each in turn was cut into pieces: moreover, one of the Friars having spread his frock over the corpse, this was forthwith cut piecemeal by the people. Thrice, on the way, was the cloth renewed that covered her; for men left nought of that which was laid upon her, but all was torn into a thousand shreds. The soldiers, who did all they might to defend her with swords and maces, could scarce hinder the people from cutting her body itself to pieces, in their excess of devotion.¹ We had thus all the pains in the world to bring her holy body decently to the church; and it was the chief men of the town who, out of respect, desired to carry the bier.

¹ When St Elizabeth of Hungary was carried to her grave, the people did actually cut her flesh for relics. "*Quaedam autem aures illius truncabant, etiam summitatem mamillarum ejus quidam praecidebant,*" etc. (I. B. Mencken, *Scriptores*, vol. II, col. 2032).

TRICKS OF TRADE

Berthold von Regensburg, or of Ratisbon, was born about 1220 of a well-to-do citizen family. He joined the Franciscans while still a youth, and became the favourite pupil of David of Augsburg, whose writings were often attributed in the Middle Ages to St Bonaventura. He was already famous as a preacher in 1250, until his death in 1272 he tramped from village to village, like a Whitefield or a Wesley, through Bavaria, Rhineland, Switzerland, Swabia, Austria, Moravia, Bohemia, Silesia, Thuringia and Franconia. His fame spread all over Europe; he is enthusiastically extolled in the chronicles of Salimbene and the XXIV Generals; and Roger Bacon, speaking of contemporary preaching in words which do not err on the side of compliment, expressly excepts Berthold as one who "alone maketh more excellent profit in preaching than almost all the other Friars of either Order" (*Opp Inedd.* R S. p. 310). A thick volume of Berthold's sermons, translated into modern German, is in its third edition as a book of living theology (Regensburg, Manz, 1873). The text here used is that of Franz Pfeiffer (2 vols. Vienna, 1862). In the first extract, I put together in an abbreviated form what Berthold says on the same subject in three different sermons. The abrupt changes from *thou* to *ye* are in the original.

30. TRICKS OF TRADE

(Band 1, S. 146, 285, 478)

THE first are ye that work in clothing, silks, or wool or fur, shoes or gloves or girdles. Men can in no wise dispense with you; men must needs have clothing, therefore should ye so serve them as to do your work truly; not to steal half the cloth, or to use other guile, mixing hair with your wool or stretching it out longer, whereby a man thinketh to have gotten good cloth, yet thou hast stretched it to be longer that it should be, and makest a good cloth into useless stuff. Nowadays no man can find a good hat for thy falsehood; the rain will pour down through the brim into his bosom. Even such deceit is there in shoes, in furs, in curriers' work; one man sells an old skin for a new, and how manifold are your deceits no man knoweth so well as thou and thy master the devil. Why should I come here to teach thee frauds? Thou knowest enough thyself.

The second folk are all such as work with iron tools, goldsmiths, penny-smiths, and other smiths, and carpenters or blacksmiths, and all manner of men that smite, and stone-masons and turners, and all such as use handicrafts with iron.

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Such should all be true and trustworthy in their office, whether they work by the day or the piece, as many carpenters and masons do. When they labour by the day, they should not stand all the more idle that they may multiply the days at their work. If thou labourest by the piece, then thou shouldest not hasten too soon therefrom, that thou mayest be rid of the work as quickly as possible, and that the house may fall down in a year or two; thou shouldest work at it truly, even as it were thine own. Thou smith, thou wilt shoe a steed with a shoe that is naught; and the beast will go perchance scarce a mile thereon when it is already broken, and the horse may go lame, or a man be taken prisoner or lose his life. Thou art a devil and an apostate; thou must go to the apostate angels. They fell not from one Order only, but from all ten Orders; and so fall many thousand from these nine Orders. The tenth is utterly fallen beyond recall; I bar no man from contrition and repentance, but, otherwise, such as beat out the long knives wherewith men slay their fellow-men, such may use deceit or not, may sell dear or cheap as they will, yet for their soul there is no help.

The third are such as are busied with trade; we cannot do without them. They bring from one kingdom to another what is good cheap there, and whatsoever is good cheap beyond the sea they bring to this town, and whatsoever is good cheap here they carry over the sea. Thus some bring us from Hungary, others from France; some on ships, some on waggons; driving beasts or bearing packs. Howsoever that be, they all follow the same office. Thou, trader, shouldst trust God that He will find thee a livelihood with true winnings, for so much hath He promised thee with His divine mouth. Yet now thou swearest so loudly how good thy wares are, and what profit thou givest the buyer thereby; more than ten or thirty times takest thou the names of all the saints in vain—God and all His saints, for wares scarce worth five shillings! That which is worth five shillings thou sellest, maybe, sixpence higher than if thou hadst not been a blasphemer of our Lord, for thou swearest loud and boldly: “I have been already offered far more for these wares”: and that is a lie, and so often as thou swearest by God and His saints, so often hast thou

TRICKS OF TRADE

broken one of the Ten Commandments; that is a great mortal sin, whereof thou committest perchance ten or more at one little bargain. Now see how many those sins become ere a year is past, and how many in ten years! And all those sins together thou couldst well have forborne, for many men are so prudent of evil that, the more thou swearest, the less they are willing to buy from thee; and thy worldly profit is small thereby, while all the time thou damnest away thine own salvation; for he goeth oftentimes away without buying, howsoever thou mayest have sworn to him. And if thou wilt buy anything from simple folk, thou turnest all thy mind to see how thou mayest get it from him without money, and weavest many lies before his face; and thou biddest thy partner go to the fair also, and goest then a while away and sayest to thy partner what thou wilt give the man for his wares, and biddest him come and offer less. Then the simple country-fellow is affrighted, and will gladly see thee come back; so thou gettest it untruly from him, and swearest all the while: "Of a truth," thou sayest, "by all the saints, no man will give thee so much for these as I!" yet another would have given more. If thou wouldst keep thyself free from mortal sin in trade, see that thou swear not. Thou shouldst say: "If thou wilt not buy it, perchance another will": and should thus sell honestly without lie or deceit. Thus should a man keep himself in trade; for many thousand souls are damned thereby, seeing that there is so much fraud and falsehood and blasphemy that no man can tell it. Ye yourselves know best what lies and frauds are busy in your trade!

The fourth are such as sell meat and drink, which no man can disregard. Wherefore it is all the more needful that thou shouldst be true and honest therein; for other deceit dealeth only with earthly goods, but this deceit with a man's body, which many would not give for all the goods in the world. If thou offerest measly or rotten flesh that thou hast kept so long until it be corrupt, then art thou guilty perchance of one man's life, perchance of ten. Or if thou offerest flesh that was unwholesome before the slaughter, or unripe of age, which thou knowest well and yet givest it for sale, so that folk eat it into their clean souls which are so dear a treasure to

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Almighty God, then dost thou corrupt the noble treasure which God hath buried in every man; thou art guilty of the blood of these folk. The same say I to him who selleth fish. Thou keepest thy fish captive in water until Friday come, then they are corrupt, and a man eateth his death by them, or some great sickness. So are certain innkeepers and cooks in the town, who keep their sodden flesh too long, whereof a guest eateth and falleth sick thereafter for his life long. So also do certain others betray folk with corrupt wine or mouldy beer, or unsodden mead, or give false measure, or mix water with the wine. Certain others, again, bake rotten corn to bread, whereby a man may lightly eat his own death: and they salt their bread, which is most unwholesome. We read not that salt is so unwholesome and harmful in any other food as in bread: and, the better it is salted, the nearer to great sickness or death.

The fifth folk are such as till the earth for wine or corn. Such should live truly towards their lords and towards their fellows, and among each other; not plough one over the other's landmark, nor trespass nor reap beyond the mark, nor feed their cattle to another's harm, nor work any other deceit, one on the other, nor betray their fellows to the lord. Fie, traitor! untrue man! Where sittest thou before mine eyes, thou Chusi, thou Achithophel? And thou shouldst be true to thy lord; yet thou dost thy service so sparingly and so slothfully and with such constraint! and, when he chideth thee, then dost thou leave him and flee to some other master. Sometimes the lords also are guilty here. Ye lords, ye deal sometimes so ill with your poor folk, and can never tax them too high; ye would fain ever tax them higher and higher. It is far better for you that ye should take small taxes every year, and take these all the more straitly. Ye cannot till the land yourselves, therefore should ye so deal with your folk that they gladly serve you; and it is their duty too to serve you truly and live truly one with the other and sell truly among themselves.—Thou boor, thou bringest to the town a load of wood that is all full of crooked billets beneath, so sellest thou air for wood! and the hay thou layest so cunningly on the waggon that no man can profit thereby; thou art a right false deceiver. Moreover, thou layest fine corn at the top of the sack, and the evil

TRICKS OF TRADE

corn beneath; and all thy work is spoiled with deceit and hate and envy.

The sixth folk are all that deal with medicine, and these must take great heed against untruth, for in that office standeth no less at stake than body and soul. He who is no good master of that art, let him in no wise undertake it, or folks' blood will be on his head, the blood of all men to whom he giveth his medicines at a venture. Yet such as are not learned and understand nothing—nay not even to deal with a wound—such men presume to possess and exercise the inward art, and must needs give drinks to folk. Take heed, thou doctor, and keep thyself from this as thou lovest the kingdom of heaven. For thou hast not the right knowledge that a man should have; thou wert as easily hit upon the wrong as upon the right, for even learned masters have enough to do here.—"O, Brother Berthold, four times already have I had all success!" Lo! that was but a blow at a venture. Therefore if thou wilt not let this matter go and study further in the inward art, then the rulers of this world should forbid it thee on pain of curse and banishment. We have murderers enough without thee, to slay honest folk. Deal with thy wounds for the present, and practise the rest until thou be past master. Whether they be children or old folk, thou hast much need of good art before thou canst well cut them for the stone. . . .

Almighty God send in His Grace that these nine Orders be kept safe, for the tenth Order is utterly fallen from us and become apostate. These are buffoons, fiddlers, and timbrel-players, and all such folk, whatsoever their name be, that sell their honour for money. Such should have made up the tenth Order, but now they are apostate from us through their falsehood. For such a man speaketh to another the best words that he can before his face, and when his back is turned he speaketh of him all evil that he can or may; and blameth full many a man who is upright before God and the world, and praiseth another who liveth to God's harm and the world's. For such men have turned their whole lives only to sins and shame. They blush not for any sin or shame, yea, thou buffoon, whatsoever the devil is ashamed to speak, that speakest thou; and all that the devil may pour into thee thou

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lestest fall from thy mouth. Alas, that ever Holy Baptism came upon thee, since thou hast denied thy Baptism and thy Christendom! And all that men give to thee they give sinfully, and must answer for it to God at the Last Day. If there be such here, forth with him!

So are some men deceivers and liars like the craftsmen. The shoemaker saith: "See, these are two most excellent soles"; and he hath burned them before the fire, and lieth and cheateth thee of thy money. And the baker floods his dough with yeast, so that thou, who dreamest to have bought bread, thou hast bought mere air for bread. And the huxter pours beer sometimes, or water, into his oil; and the butcher will sell calves' flesh at times, saying: "It is three weeks old"; and it is scarce a week old. . . . Ye fishers, ye must catch fish with manifold devices; and these fish betoken the poor folk; for the fish is a very poor and naked beast; it is ever cold, and liveth ever in the water, and is naked and cold and bare of all graces. So are also the poor folk; they, too, are helpless. Wherefore the devils have set the bait for them that is called untruth, because they are poor and helpless; with no bait could the devil have taken so many of them as with this. Because the fishes are poor and naked, therefore they devour one another in the water; so do also poor folk; because they are helpless, therefore have they divers wiles and invent many deceits. When such a man would sell anything, he doth it untruly, lying and deceiving and stealing. But the poor naked folk that are called menservants and maidservants and that serve your needs, such will steal your salt and your bacon, your meal and your corn. Thou servant, thou stealest eggs and cheese, thou stealest bread; if thou canst not steal a whole loaf thou stealest the fragments and the half loaves and the half joints of flesh! And those too are false to whom thou bringest thy thefts, for if they took it not thou wouldst have left it alone. Thus many a man betrayeth another for his life or his possessions; but none are so false as the countryfolk among each other, who are so untrue that for envy and hatred they can scarce look upon one another. One will drive another's cattle to his harm and damage, and another will buy his fellow-peasant out of his farm, all from untruth.

WOMEN'S DRESS

31. WOMEN'S DRESS

(*Zb. S.* 408 abbreviated, the description of ladies' dresses is completed from Band 1, S 253, 397, and Band 11, S. 242.)

I AM come here to speak of these words, how you should beware of these snares of the devil, for the holy saint saw so many thereof that he said: "Alas, Lord! is there any who may avoid all these snares?" He saw well that the whole of the world was full of the devil's snares. They go by night to towns and villages in great companies and multitudes and lay their snares and gins of many kinds, for the devils have nought else to do than daily to set more and more of such snares.—"But, Brother Berthold, thou sayest much to us of these devils and of their manifold guiles, and we never see a single devil with our eyes, nor hear we any, nor grasp, nor feel them."—Lo, now! that is even the worst harm that they do thee; for, didst thou see but once a single devil as he is, then wouldst thou surely never commit one sin again; that itself is one of their snares the worst of all that they have, that they deal so stealthily with us. Now see how dead a silence they keep, albeit there are many thousand of them here in this place! Ye devils, ye hear me well enough preaching here, yet ye would not take all the wealth that is under heaven (I except a man's soul) that only one of you should let himself once be seen; for then all your cunning and your snares would avail you no more. Now see, ye young folk, what a deadly snare that is, that no man may ever see a devil! Behold now what silence they keep, though so many are here with us, for if ye saw them but once ye would never sin more, since they are so foul of form that, if we could but see one single devil as he is, all mankind would die of fear. As little as a man may endure the sight of Almighty God with his fleshly eyes for excess of joy, so little may one ever see the devil for fear. And if it were so that a man might see the devil with his bodily eyes and not die of horror, and if the devil were to come out at this moment from that forest yonder,¹ and this town here

¹ Many sentences in these sermons testify to Berthold's habit of preaching in the open air, chroniclers reckoned the numbers of his hearers somewhat wildly at 60,000, or even 100,000 men.

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before us were a burning fiery furnace heated through and through, there would yet be the greatest throng of men pressing into that fiery furnace that ever there was in the world, or ever will be! . . .

The second snare which the devils set so perilously for us Christian folk, they have set specially for women. Women are as well created for the Kingdom of Heaven as men, and they need it also as much as men, and many more of them would come into the Kingdom of Heaven but for this one snare. Fie! ye wicked devils! How many thousand poor women's souls would now be in heaven but for the single snare which ye have laid so cunningly for them! Ye women, ye have bowels of compassion, and ye go to church more readily than men, and ye pray more readily than men, and come to hear preaching and to earn indulgences more readily than men; and many of you would be saved but for his one snare, which is called vain glory and empty honour. In order that ye may compass men's praise ye spend all your labour on your garments—on your veils and your kirtles. Many of you pay as much to the sempstress as the cost of the cloth itself; it must have shields on the shoulders, it must be flounced and tucked all round the hem, it is not enough for you to show your pride in your very buttonholes, but you must also send your feet to hell by special torments, ye trot this way and that way with your fine stitchings, and so many ye make, and with so much pains, that no man may rehearse it all. At the least excuse ye weary yourselves with your garments; all that wherewith ye busy yourselves is nought but vanity. Ye busy yourselves with your veils, ye twitch them hither, ye twitch them thither; ye gild them here and there with gold thread, and spend thereon all your time and trouble. Ye will spend a good six months' work on a single veil, which is sinful great travail,—and all that men may praise thy dress: "Ah, God! How fair! Was ever so fair a garment?" Yea, our Lady was far fairer than thou, yet was she exceeding humble of heart; and St Margaret, and many other saints.—"How, Brother Berthold! we do it only for the goodman's sake, that he may gaze the less on other women." No, believe me, if thy goodman be a good man indeed he would far rather see thy chaste

WOMEN'S DRESS

conversation than thine outward adorning, so that the folk point their fingers at thee and gape: "See, who is she?" or "Whose wife is she?" Or if he be a lewd fellow, then all thy crumple-crispings and christy-crosties and thy gold thread are of no avail, and they help thee only to hell for ever and ever, unless thou come to contrition and true penitence. Every woman's excuse is: "I do it not for vain glory's sake; I do it only for my goodman!" But many husbands are heartily sorry for your dressing; and then more especially when ye leave them no rest. Now ye will have this, now ye will have that; and when thou shouldest be busy in the house with something needful for the goodman, or for thyself, or thy children, or thy guests, then art thou busy instead with thy hair or thy wimple! thou art careful whether thy sleeves sit well, or thy veil, or thy headdress, wherewith thy whole time is filled—the days and the weeks and the whole year long. Now see, ye women, to how little purpose ye lose the Kingdom of Heaven! Believe me, whatsoever thou doest with thy dress, yet in all the world it is nought but a little dust and a bit of cloth. With all the crumple-crispings here and the christy-crosties there, and the gold thread here and there, yet again I say, it is nought but a bit of cloth after all! Only the Jewesses and the parsons' lemans and the lost women who walk outside the town walls—only such should wear these yellow scarves, that they may be known from the rest. Ye men might put an end to this and fight against it doughtily, first with good words, and if they are still obdurate, then ye should step valiantly in.—"Ah, Brother Berthold, yet that is a perilous enemy whom the goodman must always keep in his house! I have oftentimes besought my wife kindly and commanded her straitly, yet would she never forbear. Now therefore, were I to pull one veil from her, I fear lest she should do me all the greater harm behind my back, and go buy another twice as dear."—Lo, now, thou shouldest take heart of grace. Thou art a man after all, and bearest a sword, yet thou art easily conquered with a distaff. Take courage, and pluck up heart and tear it from her head, even though four or ten hairs should come away with it, and cast it into the fire! Do thus not thrice or four times only; and presently she will forbear.

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It is fitting that the man should be the woman's lord and master.

Thomas Cantimpranus (of Chantimpré in Brabant) was the son of a noble who had fought under our Richard I in the Holy Land. A hermit near Antioch, to whom the father had confessed his sins, warned him that some of them would keep him long in purgatory unless he bred up one of his sons to the priesthood. The child Thomas was therefore sent to school at Liège, where (as he tells us in no. 69 in vol. 1) he spent eleven years. At the age of fifteen he was much impressed by Jacques de Vitry's preaching. In early manhood he became a Canon Regular at Chantimpré, but passed over to the stricter Dominicans about 1231. He became a very distinguished preacher, a suffragan bishop, and a fairly voluminous writer. By far the most valuable of his works is the *Bonum Universale de Apibus*, a treatise on virtues and vices by analogy with the life of the bee, illustrated by personal and historical anecdotes. This was written somewhere about 1260; my extract is from the Douay edition of 1597.

32. HUNTERS AND FARMERS :

(Lib. II, c. 49, p. 373.)

THERE is also a fourth kind of game, of those who sport with the fowls of the air and the hounds of the earth, whereof the damnation is most manifest in clerics, who wander about after such sports and neglect their due service to Christ. Yet even in noble laymen those things may be seen to be damnable, if on this account they neglect and despise their daily prayers and masses. . . . A certain knight of high degree was wont to compel many of his tenants daily to wander and spend their labour in hunting with him; whereby very many left their own business of tilling the fields, and fell with their wives and children into poverty and want. It befel therefore one day that he went into the forest to chase the stag with his own body-servants and his household, and the hounds were in full cry, and he followed the game with all his might on horseback. But when he had ridden all day in vain, and still saw the stag fleeing ever before his face, then his mind was turned to madness, and he pursued after him all night long with his whole train; so that from that day forward no man ever saw or knew what had become of them, or whither they were



SPORT AND LABOUR

From the Heidelberg Minnesanger-Manuscript (Manessesche Handschrift,
early fourteenth century, ed F. X Kraus), fol. 396

HUNTERS AND FARMERS

gone. Some said (and we easily believe it) that the earth opened her jaws to swallow them up like Dathan and Abiram, and sucked them down to hell.

Ulrich von Lichtenstein, an Austrian knight of great distinction in his own day, was an ancestor of the present princely house of that name. Born shortly before 1200, he died in 1275 or 1276. His name first occurs in 1227 as witness to an important document, in 1241 he was Steward of his native Styria, and later on we find him Grand Marshal of that province. His wife, who plays a very subordinate rôle in his autobiography, was Bertha von Weitzenstein; she bore him two sons and two daughters.

Ulrich's poem entitled *Frauendienst* is, however we take it, one of the strangest monuments of medieval love; it bridges the gulf between the *Vita Nuova* and *Don Quixote*. We have sufficient collateral evidence to prove it partly true and partly imaginary, but not enough to unravel the two threads yet even the purely poetical additions have a real value as indications of contemporary manners. If Ulrich did not act and suffer exactly as he tells us, yet he shows us clearly how he would wish to have acted and suffered as a perfect lover. The question has been fully discussed, without any very definite conclusion, by Reinhold Becker in his *Wahrheit und Dichtung in U v L's Frauendienst* (Halle, 1888). The following extracts are from R. Bechstein's edition (Leipzig, 1888, 2 vols.) numbered according to stanzas.

33. CALF-LOVE

(Stanza 8.)

WHEN I was yet a little child, I heard oftentimes how men would read, and wise men would say, that no man may come to any worth his whole life long, but if he be ready steadfastly to serve good women; for such men have their high reward. Moreover, (said the wise men) no man is so truly glad and happy in this world, as he who loveth a pure and virtuous lady no less than his own self, and they said that all men had done so who would fain come to honour. I was then but a child, and so foolish that I yet rode hobby-horse, nevertheless [I thought in my simplicity]. "Since pure women do thus exalt a man, then will I ever serve the ladies with body, goods, spirit and life." In such thoughts I grew until my twelfth year. Then I thought to and fro within my childish heart, enquiring after the manners and beauty, the wit and virtue

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of all ladies throughout the land. When any man praised good women, then would I, softly smiling, follow at his heels; for my delight was in their praise. So it befel that I heard of a lady whose praise was in the best men's mouths of the land, and in whom men found most goodness. She was high of birth, fair and good, chaste and pure, and fulfilled of all virtues. In this lady's service I abode wellnigh five years. Then said my heart unto me: "Good friend, good fellow, wilt thou give thyself up to one woman? then must it be to this one, for she is free in all her ways." "Heart, I will follow thy bidding; yet is it too much for both of us to serve for such guerdon as a man hath from a woman, for she is too high-born for us, so may it befall that we both alike lose our service." "Peace, body! no woman was ever so high and so rich but that a noble knight who served her with mind, heart, and body, might win her in the end." "Heart, I swear to thee by all mine hopes of heaven that she is dearer to me than mine own self; wherefore, in this same loving mind which I now hold towards her, therein will I serve her for ever."

When therefore soul and body were thus resolved to woo this fair lady, then went I and stood before her, and looked lovingly upon her, saying within myself: "O bliss! shall this be mine own sweet lady? But how may I serve as beseemeth her worth, better than so many other noble boys in her service? It may be that one of them will serve her better, and that my lady will hate me; for I have no other wit than to serve her early and late; yet it may be that some other who loves her less will serve her better; nevertheless in love at least will I excel them all." Oftentimes in summer I plucked fair flowers, and brought them to my lady; and when she took them in her white hand I thought with joy: "Where thy hand is now, there hath mine own hand been." When I came and saw others pour water upon the lily-white hands of my beloved, then would I bear away secretly this water which she had touched, and drink it for love of her. Thus in my childish fashion I served her well, even as a child may serve, until my father took me from her, on which day I knew heartfelt mourning and the power of love. My body did indeed depart from thence; but my heart abode there still, for it

CALF-LOVE

would not come with me. Little rest had I by night or by day, wheresoever I went or rode, my heart was ever with her; and, how far soever I might be removed from her, yet her mild light shone by night into mine heart. I was sent unto a lord rich in all virtues, the Markgraf Heinrich of Austria. He served the ladies right loyally, and spake well of them as beseemeth a knight; he was mild, bold, and magnanimous; he bare himself as a wise man with wise men and as a fool with fools; he suffered hardships for honour's sake, and his tongue spake no word of villainy; to all his friends was he ever honest and true, and loved God with all his heart. This worthy lord said unto me that whosoever would fain live in worthiness must give himself wholly to some lady. He taught me much of his own sweet virtue, he taught me to speak of ladies, to ride a horse, and to write sweet words in letters—saying that a young man is of more worth when he can speak sweetly of ladies; “for,” quoth he, “never shalt thou fare well with good women, if thy heart be set upon flattery and lies.” Had I followed all his precepts in deed, then had I been a worthier man than I now am.

Meanwhile Ulrich is knighted, and sends to the lady his first song. He begs his aunt (who acts as go-between) to tell the lady how he loves her; the latter answers that, even though he were otherwise her equal, yet no lady could abide his hare-lip. Ulrich immediately promises that he will undergo an operation (stanza 85).

34. MEDIEVAL SURGERY

THEN said mine aunt, “I counsel thee in all loyalty, spoil not thine own self; live as God hath bid thee live, and be willingly content with that which He hath given; for if so thou doest, thy sense is sound; but thou art overweening if thou willest otherwise than God willeth.” “God bless thee, fair Aunt; but know that mine own purpose is fixed, and I will duly tell thee how it goeth or prospereth with me;

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meanwhile I beseech thee, by thy true affection, bear tidings whereof to my beloved lady." "Thereto plight I my troth; yet know, nephew, it grieveth me sore that thou wilt not desist from thy purpose." So I took leave of my good kinswoman, and rode to Gratz in Styria, where I found many a good master-leech, to the best of whom I told my purpose forthwith. "Nay," quoth he, "that may not be as yet, I will not cut thee before the month of May; but come to me in the May-days, and I swear upon my troth so to deal with thy mouth as that thou shalt have good cause to rejoice; for in these matters I am past-master." Wherefore I rode thence, since those were winter-days, to see fair ladies; until winter was past, and the sweet summer came, and I heard the litle fowls' song. Then thought I within myself: "Now may it well be time that I betake me to Gratz again, God help me there!" So thence I rode in God's hand, and lo! on the way I met with my lady's squire. I knew him well and he knew me, and he asked whither I rode and whereon my purpose was set. "Comrade, I will tell thee true, nor will I hide the strange tidings; know now that I am whole and sound, yet I am freely purposed to wound myself, the leech in Gratz will cut me." Then the good squire crossed himself and said, "Why, lord, where shalt thou be cut?" "Lo, comrade, these lips whereof I have three, and I will now have one cut away." "And if that be true, then God help you; so say I in all earnest, for this is a wondrous tale, my lady doubtless knoweth nought thereof, I will tell it her now for very wonder's sake. God knoweth, ye must needs be beside yourself, that ye will hazard this venture uncompelled, whereby ye may lightly take your death." "Nay, tell the tale freely to whom thou wilt, for so I am resolved it shall come to pass on this journey of mine." "Truly then will I be there to see, if that be your good pleasure, and will report to my lady that ye would fain have me with you to behold how ye fare." Wherefore I rode on my way to Gratz, where my business lay, and where I found my Master. He took me in hand forthwith, and went about to cut me on a Monday morning. He would fain have bound me, but I would not; then said he, "Ye may lightly take harm thereby; for, an ye stir but a hair's breadth, then the

Fungul de nare
Incincidetur

5



A SURGICAL OPERATION

From MS. Harl. 1585, fol 18 b (Strutt, *orda Angel Cynnan*, pl. xxxiii) The legend runs
"Thus is a polypus of the nose cut "

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harm is done, I speak no lie!" "Nay," quoth I, "I will have no such gear, of mine own free will rode I hither to you; and, howsoever ye deal with me now, though it were to my death, no man shall see me blench." Yet in truth I was sore afraid, and sat me down on a bench before his face. Then he took a knife in his hand and cut my mouth clean through above my teeth; all which I bore with so great patience that, when all the cutting was done, I had stirred no whit. Masterlike he cut me, and manlike I bore it all. Forthwith my mouth swelled; it was far bigger than a tennis ball, and he dressed the wounds as befitted his office. Then said my lady's squire (for he had seen it all): "If ye come to your health again, then am I glad to have been here. When I rode from you of late and told my lady how the man would cut you here, then she would never believe me; 'Nay,' quoth she, 'Of a surety he will not, trust my word, for methinks that were a fool's deed to let himself thus be cut.' Now have I seen right well with mine own eyes what marvels have been done; wherefore I will ride hence again; may the God of bounty keep you and make you whole in good time; meanwhile I will report to my lady how your mouth was cut and how manlike ye have borne it." "Nay, thou shalt tell my lady nought but to speak of my service, for I dare tell her no more; yet do thou tell whom thou wilt, as from me, how these bodily pains of mine were endured for a lady's sake who said that my mouth beseeemed me ill. That is the cause of these my pains; for I have served her all my life (thus much I tell thee openly); whatsoever therefore displeaseth her is hateful to me, and if my right hand stood ill in her eyes, then by God! I would smite it off forthwith! Thereof will I speak little; for my will standeth in her will alone." Then rode the squire forth from me, and I must needs lie on my sickbed five and a half weeks or more, there lay I in much weal and in sore woe:—woe for the wound of my body, but comfort for the gladness of heart. Love constrained me so that I was both sad and merry. Yet was I ever glad for all my pains, though sore disquieted with hunger and thirst; nought could I take to myself for my sore pain of teeth and lips, and therewithal my mouth was anointed with an ointment greener than grass and ranker to

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the smell than any hound.¹ Then did love-need constrain me; for, whensoever I would have eaten or drunken for my need, then came this ointment into my belly withal; and my body took such a smack thereof that I loathed all meat and drink. Therefore I lived as those live who eat nought for very sickness of body, whereby I was sore weakened . . . In Gratz I abode until I was whole again.

Shortly after this, Ulrich got speech of his lady, for the first time in his life, he then sent her a "little book" in verse. He next goes on to tell of the tourneys at Frisach and Brixen, in the latter of which he lost his little finger. Shortly after this, he cut off a finger of his own accord and sent it to his lady with another "little book." Then, with her leave, he went Romewards in garb of a pilgrim; but at Venice he took the guise of a Queen, issued a letter as from "Frau Venus" inviting all knights to joust by the way, and rode twenty-eight days' journey into Bohemia, with veiled face and muffled hands, speaking to no man. He writes (stanza 472): "At Venice I lay all winter through, hear now what I wrought there. I caused ladies' garments to be made, twelve gowns were made for me and thirty fair ladies' sleeves sewn upon little shirts; such was my device.² Therewithal I got me two comely-braided tresses of hair, which I richly entwined with pearls whereof I found great plenty for sale in Venice; at the same time they made me there white samite mantles; silverwhite were my saddles, wrought by the master with much labour and cunning craft, and their trappings were of white cloth, long and broad and of masterly work, with bridles of great cost." After this long and somewhat aimless adventure, and another tourney at Kornneuburg, Ulrich determined to venture to his lady's castle in the guise of a leper (stanza 1124).

35. ULRICH AND HIS DULCINEA

ON Saturday at dawn I went forthwith on my journey with two followers, taking good care that none should know whither I went. . . . That day I rode six-and-thirty miles,

¹ The German editor, taking this to be a popular ointment of marjoram, is at a loss to account for its rankness. But the stuff would probably be a very common medieval salve for wounds which was compounded mainly of verdegins. See p. 39 of the fifteenth-century translation of Lanfrank's *Science of Chirurgie* (Early English Text Society).

² I.e. a fresh sleeve daily for his journey. We learn from stanza 511 that the tresses hung down to his saddle, and that he therefore wore them in a net.

LIFE IN THE MIDDLE AGES

and was sore wearied with so great and hasty a journey; two of my horses (I lie not) fell dead on the road, yet small heed had I thereof. By nightfall I came to a town where I got me basins such as lepers bear, and wretched garments. Thus I and my messenger disguised ourselves next day; no fouler clothes could have been; yet we bare long knives upon us, if perchance our lives might come into jeopardy. That Sunday morning I rode two miles thence in such wretched array; then I left our horses in a secret place, and went with my messenger two miles further to the gates of a glorious castle, where the virtuous lady abode with her household—mine own good lady, whom I never forgot! To that castle I went forthwith; and without the gates I found many poor folk sitting there beyond all number, if I shall tell truth, a good thirty lepers or more sat there, in their miserable sores. Many were pained with grievous torments. I must needs go sit with them (which I would fain have avoided, but my comrade bade me thither), as though I too had been sick. Then that crowd of lepers greeted us with a mighty snort of welcome. I will not lie; grievously sick were many of that crew, and I sat down among them on the grass. Therewith all asked with one voice whence we were; whereat I was abashed and said, "We are two strangers, that have never yet been here; poverty hath urged us, if perchance some man would give us help." Then said they: "Happily are ye come hither; perchance ye know not that the lady of this house lieth sick, wherefore folk give us oftentimes our fill of food and pennies withal, a maiden hath even now brought us bread and wine (may she be blessed for ever!) and ye also should have gifts if your coming were known, believe us well. Knock therefore boldly and beg after the wont of us poor folk; wine and bread shall ye have for your pains, wherewith ye may still your ravening hunger, and, if perchance no pennies to-day, yet to-morrow at least without fail." So I departed from these lepers and went to stand by an oriel window that was hung with fair tapestry, such as men hang oftentimes at a window against overmuch wind or light. . . . Thither I took my basin, that rang like a bell, and knocked so loud that it sounded even into the ladies' parlour, after which I miserably besought a

ULRICH AND HIS DULCINEA

morsel of bread for the sore hunger that beset me. As I prayed thus, a maiden looked forth from the window and beheld us twain standing alone and apart from the rest; whereupon she closed it again and went to tell her lady how we stood there; and the pure saint looked out upon us. After a while this maiden came forth from the gate and gave unto each of the lepers a penny; and when she was come to us, the sweet maiden spake from her red mouth: "Tell me, when came ye hither? I have not yet seen you here." Then I made my voice strange unto her and answered, "We suffer sore discomfort of sickness and poverty; whosoever will help us aught for God's sake may work his own eternal bliss, for we are come hither in great poverty and are well nigh dead for hunger and for stress of want." Then drew she nearer to us and said, "Let me know who ye are; I may no longer tarry here; if ye be come for my lady's sake, tell it me forthwith and conceal not the truth." Then said I to that fair damsel. "Lady, in truth, your lady bade me come hither; and know that I am he whose joy standeth in her grace, and who hath ever served her and will ever truly serve her unto my life's end." Then answered she forthwith. "If thou art high-minded for ladies' sake, then shall your stout and worthy arms enfold a worthy lady: ye sit here with little likeness to one who hath broken spears for his lady's grace and borne himself with knightly strength, yet will I tell my lady from you that ye are come hither for her sake; when she hath heard of your good coming, then will I return and tell how ye shall fare here." Therewithal she departed to find my Fair, and said forthwith in all truth how I was here. Then said my pure and sweet lady, "Truly I am right glad thereof; bid him welcome for me, for I have gladly heard of his coming; go again secretly and bring him somewhat, bid the proud knight go down the hill and take good heed lest he be discovered, and spare mine honour as he loveth his own life. Bid him come up again in the evening, then will I let him know what I have bethought and wherefore I have brought him hither: take to him now flesh of capons, bread, and wine, and bid him be right welcome." The maid went swiftly thence and found me yet waiting there, she and another maiden brought me meat and

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wine in plenty; seeing therefore that there was another with her, I set my bowl far from me and said, "Lady, set the meat therein; for alas! my sickness lieth hard on me." Then the one maiden halted, but the other drew near to me, saying, "I fear not thy sickness, my worthy lady hath bidden you God-welcome; she would fain see you, if so it may be without shame. She hath bidden you through me (wherefore ye must willingly obey), to go down forthwith and beware of discovery and keep yourself well; this must needs be, or you are but a dead man: your own sense will tell you that, and I counsel you well, foolish as I stand here. Then at nightfall shall ye come up again hither, then will I discover to you my lady's mind; I ween well that she is gracious to you; be sure that she hateth you not, for such favour hath she never yet shown to any knight." With this she departed from me; and when she was gone I took my meat and drink and bare it to the lepers, saying: "My lady hath given us great plenty of meat and drink to-day! God grant her a long and happy life! Never did I get so great alms, wherefore I will share it with you, and we will hold it in common, and ye shall do likewise to us when ye get good meat." "Yea," said they, "So be it; for men oftentimes give us flesh and bread and wine, which we will share in turn with thee and live in good fellowship." So we sat all in a ring and set there the good flesh and wine; I saw in that dish many a hand such as I dare not here speak of; yea, I must needs restrain my words for very courtesy; the hair stood straight on my head to see that filth. . . . With such folk must I now eat; rather would I have lost my life than sit there among them; yet care for my good lady's good name constrained me. Had I not gone in among these folk, then had I been discovered without fail. Now know I that many will say, I could not have dwelt among these lepers but that they had discovered me to be free from their sickness. To such an one would I answer that he knoweth not the virtue of simples, which can work many wonders. I have not yet forgot the herb which, if a man take it in his mouth, will make him swell forthwith and change the fashion of his countenance so that no man may know him; he may wander unknown throughout the whole earth; this art I know, simple

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as I am.¹ Those same herbs had I there; I had coloured my hair grey, yet methinks I needed it not, for ye might already see me grey with care before my time. . . .

When we sick folk had eaten, I went forthwith down the hill into the village, and begged for alms in the guise of a sick man. Men gave me much broken meat, which I took for my lady's sake, they gave me enough and to spare, but I bare it forth and laid it in a furrow, nor know I who took it thence; I know well that it profited me not. So I went about begging for pastime until evening came on, and the setting sun cast his rays athwart the hill; then went I again to the castle-gate and sat in my place among the lepers, who gave me a ready welcome. Then asked I whether they had yet eaten. "Nay," said they, "we eat even now, ye are come in good time; for now they will bring our evening dole at so timely an hour that each may creep away to his own shelter." Here sat I a good space, until the fair maid came again to us, with attendants that bore meat and wine in plenty. Then said she to me, "Get you down without delay and come again to-morrow for the morning meal; take good heed meanwhile." "Nay," quoth I, "what boots it to my lady that I am here in so wondrous wise, if she will not see me secretly?" "Not so," quoth she, "for that may not be until the morrow. She hath surely purposed to see you before your departure; only take heed that none discover you." When the maiden was gone, I ate among the lepers sore against my will, for their company was loathsome unto me. . . . After our meal was done, then each vied with the other to bid me to his own hut; but I made answer: "One of my fellows lieth sore sick. I will go thither and spend the night with him for God's sake, and for mine own troth." So I departed straightway from the castle unto a field afar off, where I found the corn both thick and high; thither I and

¹ Compare the following extract from a fourteenth-century book of medicine and magic preserved in the Communal Library of Siena and alluded to on pp 320 ff. of Mr W. Heywood's *Ensamles of Fra Filippo* I owe the transcript from the Italian text to Mr Heywood's good offices "*Chapter 235 To make a man appear a Leper.* Take the husks of fresh walnuts, and draw out the juice, and wash in the said juice, and thou shalt appear a leper. And then shalt thou wash in water of bean-leaves and of elder, and thou shalt return to thy right colour." It must be remembered that all forms of skin disease were commonly confounded under the one name of leprosy.

LIFE IN THE MIDDLE AGES

my fellow fled from the lepers, and the corn must needs be our inn for that night. There spent I a most evil night, believe me; for with the sunset and darkness arose a great wind, and the rain beat down in torrents; there was I in sore straits, for a ragged worn-out coat and mantle were all my shelter against the rain, and I was half frozen to death. Moreover, my need was greater still; for (I will not lie) the worm that hath no name bit me so sore throughout the night that I burst well nigh out of my body; many a guest tormented me that night, both he and she.¹ Heartily glad was I to see the glimmer of day: then ran I hither and thither until I was warm again. Believe me, when Ereck lay in Enid's arms, it was better with him than with me on that most evil night. Had I not lived on thoughts of love, I had never been whole again. but sweet hope upheld me. Though bodily comfort be good, yet thoughts of love are better still; he who hath such amid his troubles may well be comforted and glad.

When the sun stood high, then went I again without delay to my place at the castle gates, where I knocked and begged piteously for alms, all my garments were wet to the skin, and I was in sore distress. Then came the maiden again with much meat; I thought within myself. "My lady will fain make me sick indeed!" Then came the maiden and said, "Where were ye yesternight in that wicked weather? for ye must needs have suffered sore distress if ye had no roof" "Yea," quoth I, "much discomfort have I suffered, and was well nigh dead for cold and other pains which I dare not tell; yet I suffer all gladly and joyfully if but my lady will do me grace, for therein standeth my life" "Eat then," quoth she, "and go down the hill again; but come again at eventide, for (by my troth I swear it) my most worthy lady will leave you there no more: to-night she will see you" Then she departed from me, and her tale rejoiced me much; wherefore I went amongst the sick folk, among whom I must needs eat again, with how-ever evil will. Then I went into a wood where many fowls sang; there I set my body in the sun and clean forgot the cold; my fellow meanwhile picked most busily; he picked here and

¹ The Florentines (according to Bechstein) still use the nicknames *boy* and *girl* for *pulce* and *cimice* this suits the German genders, if not the Italian.

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picked there throughout that livelong day; no Italian could have done it better or more cunningly, yet to me no day was ever so long as this . . . Thus sat I here in the forest until it drew towards evening; then I arose and went up in high hope, right as a man whose heart hath high desire of love, and who deemeth that it is returned; rightly may his heart then stand high, and thus it was with me. I sat again at the castle gate, as ye may well believe, but I was too early; men had not yet begun to flock thither as they do towards sunset: yet there I sat in high hopes and thought within myself: "Well is me, if I shall indeed this night see my lady!" So high stood my hopes of love, when this virtuous maiden came demurely again to me, saying: "Ye have done right well to come so early; I know not if ye have heard it, but one of the sick folk saith that ye be no true leper, for he saith that ye wear undergarments of so fine linen as any nobleman might be honoured to possess, I know not how he hath seen it, yet thus hath he said to me, and I fear sore lest he may say the same to others." Then said I, "If I be discovered, that is by my lady's fault; why would she have me sit here and go all day hence? and how could they otherwise have seen and suspected me? Counsel me now, lady, what I should do." "Go then forthwith, and tarry no longer here, for that is my lady's purpose: yet mark me now. At the parting of day and night, come hither again and hide thee in the castle ditch,¹ conceal yourself well, as ye are wise, for the need is great, that may ye well see. Mark me now well; see ye yon high oriel? When a light shall be shown thence, tarry no longer, but come swiftly beneath the window, and ye shall find bedclothes hanging, knotted in a loop, whereby ye shall be drawn up."

So I did as she bade me, and went forthwith into the forest again; my mood was turned again to gladness and I thought: "Now, well is me for evermore, since I shall see my beloved lady this night, whereof I will rejoice!" In that forest I tarried until day was gone and dark night had chased the light away; then I hastened to the ditch and swiftly walled myself in with stones that no man might see me, my fellow did like-

¹ Which would of course be a dry ravine hewn in the rock, as this was a hill-castle.

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wise; then must we lie as still as death. As we lay thus hidden, the seneschal himself went seven times around the castle hither and thither, seeking diligently whether any man were come to hide: full closely did he peer around . . . Then he went into the castle, and I marked the light shining from the oriel: forthwith I rose up and drew off the ragged garments wherein I was disguised and hid them full fast. Swiftly I crept under the window, where I found the coverlet hanging; wherein I set myself willingly, my fellow was full handy and shoved after me with a right good will; my heart beat in haste until white hands drew me somewhat upwards. But when I was come so high that my trusty fellow might help me no further, then know that they could draw me no higher, whereof both they and I were sorry. With this they let me suddenly fall, then they strove afresh, and drew me as high as before: yet no hair's breadth further might they bring me, to their sorrow and mine. Thus it befel me three times; when therefore I came thus for the third time to earth, I stepped forth in anger from the coverlets and said, "Good fellow mine, thou mayest well be lighter than I; step thou in, that they may draw thee up." He stepped in, and thus they did forthwith; I shoved after him with a right good will, they drew him swiftly up, and I was glad. As he stepped into the chamber, he was greeted with a kiss: for my good aunt kissed him for me, whereof she hath oftentimes since been ashamed. When this undesigned kiss had been given, my fellow let down the noose to me again; I stepped in with hearty good will, for thereto was all my desire; and forthwith they drew me up to the oriel.

As I came through the window, my aunt pressed her red mouth with hearty love to mine; then that fair and virtuous lady drew me into a corner and clad me in a robe of Bagdad brocade, wherein I went forthwith to find my lady. Chaste and sweet and merry sat she there upon a bed and greeted me right modestly; she bade me welcome. I tell you how she was clad: she bare a white sark, that was full strait. Over this had my noble and fair and pure lady a robe of scarlet furred with ermine; no feather could be softer. Her mantle was green as grass, lined with soft vair, and with skirts neither too wide

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nor too close. By her stood eight ladies, right nobly clad, upon the bed lay a fair mattress of samite whereon were two quilts of silk, better there might not be, and over all such a bed-cover as no knight saw ever a fairer. There too lay a precious bolster and two most comely pillows. The floor could nowhere be seen, for it was bespread with many a fair carpet; at the bed's foot burned two great tapers in their candlesticks, and a good hundred tapers on the walls. The eight ladies of that bower were fair and lovely: richly were they clad; yet, sooth to say, methought the ladies were too many, their presence irked me, and I grieved in my heart to see them.

Here sat my worthy lady before me, no fairer or more virtuous could be seen. Then knelt I before her and said: "Lady, for your virtue and your worshipful youth's sake, for your pure sweet mind, be kind and gracious to me! Think now on my heart's desire which is turned towards your love, whom I hold dear above all other women. You are dearer to me than aught else; if therefore I may have your love *par amours*, then have I all the bliss that ever I longed for; here may you grant me high courage and worshipful life for all my days to come." Then said that pure and gentle lady: "Nay, your courage may not aspire so far as that I should lay you here by my side. Be warned, nor desire that which may not be; if I have gladly seen you here in my secret bower, that is only for your honour, since ye have so demeaned yourself as that every woman should ever honour you therefore. If therefore I could grant you honour, ye should have it from me: take it for honour that I have brought you into my chamber, a thing that hath never yet befallen any knight. My lord and master shall live ever free from fear lest I should love another man than he, for (even though I feared it not for God's honour and mine own), yet my lord would keep close watch over me; nevertheless, even though his watch were away, mine own honour is a yet stronger defence; and my pure mind helpeth him here more than aught else. If therefore I set mine honour thus in jeopardy, and neglect my homage to him, that is to honour you; for, if any man in this castle were aware of your presence, then were mine own honour tarnished; wherefore ye should thank me for this

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venture." "Ever will I thank you, dear Lady, whatsoever ye do unto me, for I know ye are so good and pure and blessed that ye alone stand betwixt me and mourning, and doubtless ye will here grant me your love this night." Then said she, "No more of this, but if ye would lose my grace. . . ." At this threat I was afraid and rose and went to mine aunt saying: "How shall this be? If I get no profit of my coming, then shall I be crestfallen: I will not believe so ill of her goodness, for that were a great ungrace and mischief, my lady shall be-think herself. Nay, aunt, I will not go hence, befall what may, until my lady grant me her love. . . ." Then said mine aunt, "Nephew, I know in truth that she hath summoned thee for no more than she saith; therefore hath she so many of us in attendance, that thou mayest do her no violence, as many men are wont to do: and I know well that, if thou but touch a hair of her head against her will, then will she never be gracious to thee, nor shalt thou ever have thy will: yet one thing have I heard her say, that thou shalt yet get her love if thou blench not in her service."

Here follow nearly 40 stanzas more of three-cornered discussions between Ulrich, the lady, and the aunt

Then came my lady to me and said, "God knoweth that I have seen no man so witless as ye are. . . if ye tarry here till morning light, then must ye surely be slain; ye should be glad to get hence as I bid you; if ye will not bear yourself mannerly towards me, then sue me not for your friend, and know that your promised troth is naught. They told me that ye would be at my service, but therein have they deceived me and belied you, as I see by your bearing: for whatsoever I pray you this night ye deny me; wherefore I esteem you but lightly." Then spake I, "Nay, dear lady, but I will ever serve you truly until my dying day. Your love shall bind me to all eternity: wherefore, dear lady of all my bliss, grant me your grace that I may love you *par amours*; for, an we must now part, then truly ye use me worse than any knight was ever used of his lady." "Follow me," quoth she, "do as I bid now, and it shall be well with you. Step once more into the coverlet: then shall I let you down but a little and draw you up again,

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and greet you well according to your desire. When I have thus received you again, I will be wholly your subject unto whatsoever end ye will, for I have chosen you above all other knights to be my friend." "Lady," quoth I, "were I well assured of that, then would I do all your will; yet I fear lest ye let me down and draw me never up again; then were I crestfallen and unhappy that ever I was born!" "Nay," quoth she, "but I will give you a pledge; for I grant that ye hold me fast by the hand, ye are no true servant of mine and ye trust me not, and yet have I chosen you to be my friend above all other knights; by my womanhood I lie not!" "Dear lady, I will commend myself wholly to your grace, as my duty biddeth; ye may deal well or evil with me as ye will, since ye say ye have chosen me above all others for friend." "Yea, and it shall be well with you if ye do after my will; in the end ye shall love me *par amours*." Therewith my good lady took me by the hand and led me until she found the coverlet that hung at the window: there she bade me step in, saying, "Fear not, trust my faith that I will not suffer you, my chosen friend, to part thus from me." Anxiously I stepped in the coverlet, and they let me down so far that they should have raised me again, then said my good lady with subtle intent, "God knoweth that I never saw so dear a knight as this who now hath me by the hand! wherefore be thou welcome to me; I will comfort thy sorrow and thou shalt be God-welcome!" Therewith she caught me by the chin and said, "Friend, kiss me now!" at which word I was so overjoyed that I let go her hand. swift then was my downward journey; and, had not God been with me, I had lightly broken my neck. When I reached the earth, the coverlet was drawn up again, and I must needs sit there in sorrow with a bitter aching heart. Then waxed I almost beside myself with grief, and cried aloud, "Alas, alas, and ever alas! woe is me, that ever I was born! now have I lost both life and honour!" Then I sprang to my feet in a frenzy, and ran down a steep path to a deep water, wherein I would have drowned myself in sin; of a truth I had died there had not my fellow come to me, whom they had let down swiftly after me. When this faithful courteous servant heard my cries, he was cut to the heart and

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ran after and caught me even as I would have leapt into the water for my death. "Alas," quoth he, "what may this be? Dear friend and master, if ye will slay yourself, then are ye lost, body and soul; better wert thou unborn. Up, then, and play the man." "Nay," quoth I, "here must my life be spilled, for I have lost my pure, worthy, sweet lady through an evil subtlety, wherefore will I no longer live!" "Nay," quoth he, "but ye should be glad to live on, for thy lady sendeth you her own pillow, whereon her cheek hath lain this many a night; she had thought to have had your love this night, and now would she fain comfort you." When he spake thus, and I saw the pillow, then my senses came somewhat back to me. sadly I sat on the ground and gazed on the trusty fellow through my tears, and said, "Alas! I am in evil case, for my pure, sweet, worthy lady hath deceived me; she bade me trust her faith that she would not let me down, a noble pledge she gave me, her own soft white hand; with subtlety she hath overcome me, which was not well done!" Then said he, "Master, ye should be glad, believe me well, to-night will she greet you with love for your delight, that ye may have your will of her. But let us tarry here no longer; the day dawneth, and it will soon be light, and ye must needs see to your young simple squire, whether he be still there with our horses, or whether he have been discovered." . . . So we went forth and found the horses. . . . Then said my fellow, "Master, now that ye are in your right mind, I dare no longer hold my peace. . . . Your lady sendeth you word, ye shall come to her this day three weeks (mark well what I say), then will she give you such welcome that you may be glad thereof your whole life long. Sore against her will hath she let you depart, as she said to me; one lady was there in her train for whose sake she must needs send thee forth; that lady will soon depart, whereof your own lady is heartily glad; then shall ye come again, and she will keep you ten days at the castle (on my troth I swear it), and deal with you as lovingly as a good lady should deal with her friend."

The lady next attempted to get rid of Ulrich by a too common device which Chaucer rebukes; she bade him go and fight the heathen overseas. The knight promised obedience, but in due time found a good

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excuse; finally, however, "she dealt so with me as it bescometh me not to tell for shame", so he cast her off and found another love. One of the latest episodes in the book shows our hero imprisoned by the treachery of certain private enemies, assisted by his "housewife" to the best of her power, and consoling himself by composing fresh poems to his second anonymous lady-love, to whom in a few verses of epilogue he dedicated this whole book of *Frauendienst*.

The following are from the collection of *Latin Stories* published by T. Wright for the Percy Society in 1842. They are from preachers' manuals of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, to be used as illustrations in sermons.

36. A MERCIFUL ARCHBISHOP

(p. 30.)

BALDWIN, monk and abbot and afterwards archbishop, was wont to eat no flesh. A certain old woman therefore asked him whether he ate flesh, whereunto he replied: "No." But she: "It is false, my lord, for thou hast eaten my flesh to the bones, and thou hast drunken my blood to the very heart. Behold how lean am I! for thy reeves have seized my cow, the only one that I had, wherefrom I and my children had our sustenance." To whom the Archbishop answered, "I will see that they shall give thee back thy cow, and from henceforth I will beware of such flesh-food."¹

37. A JONGLEUR'S REVENGE²

(p. 40.)

I HAVE heard of a certain monastery that, whereas at its first foundation it had but few possessions, the brethren were then hospitable and kind to the poor; but when they had become

¹ Mr Wright notes "I suppose the Baldwin mentioned here, was Baldwin archbishop of Canterbury, the preacher of the crusade in which Richard I distinguished himself. He was abbot of Ford in Devonshire, previous to being bishop of Worcester, from which see he was promoted to the archbishopric of Canterbury in 1184."

² This is also given in Crane's *Exempla of Jacques de Vitry*, p. 28, from which I have made one or two corrections in this text.

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rich they did the very opposite. One of their abbots, being most hard-hearted and inhuman himself, put men like unto himself into the monastic offices, the most evil whom he could find. It befel then that a jongleur was benighted on his journey and came to this monastery for entertainment; where he found neither cheerful welcome nor any pity, but got with difficulty the blackest of bread, and herbs with salt and water, and a hard pallet. Whereat he was so grieved that he began to think within himself how he might take vengeance on the heartless guestmaster. So when the day had dawned, he turned aside by the way whereby he hoped that the abbot would come back to his monastery; and, meeting him, he cried, "Welcome, my lord, my good and liberal abbot! I thank you and your whole community, for that the brother guestmaster entertained me royally last night, he set before me most excellent fish and wine of price, and so many dishes that we know not their number; and even now as I departed he gave me a pair of shoes, a belt, and a knife." The abbot, hearing this, was moved to indignation and hastened back to his abbey, where he accused the aforesaid monk in Chapter as for a grievous crime. The guestmaster denied in vain; for he was sore scourged and driven forth from his office; and the abbot set in his place another whom he believed to be still worse.

38 A WOMAN'S OATHS

(p. 61)

Not only men, however, but some women also are grown into such a habit of swearing that they can scarce even speak without an oath. . . . Whence I have heard of a woman whom, in confession, the priest commanded to swear no more: to whom she answered, "Sir, I will swear no more, so help me God!" And he "Lo, thou swearest already" "Nay, by God," quoth she, "but I will indeed abstain from henceforth." Then said the priest, "But let your speech be yea, yea! no, no! as the Lord biddeth: and that which is over and above these, is of evil." Then said she, "Sir, ye say it again, and I say unto you, by the blessed Virgin and all the saints!

A WOMAN'S OATHS

I will swear no more, but do your bidding, and ye shall never hear me swear again." So that accursed woman gave many promises, yet contradicted them in deed.

39. THE PRIEST'S FATE

(p. 124)

It is told on good authority how, in a very well-known town, a certain priest was returning from his leman in the dusk, and heard a lamentable voice proceeding from a ruined house; whereupon he drew near and enquired who cried thus in that place. "Who art thou," said the voice, "that enquirest of me?" "A priest," answered he. "What, a priest!" cried that voice in great astonishment, repeating the word twice or thrice. When therefore the priest had enquired wherefore he spake in such tones of wonder, then said the voice, "They come down so thick among us into hell, that methought no priest could be left on earth; wherefore I cried aloud in wonder to hear that one was still alive; for I deemed they were all gone down to hell!"

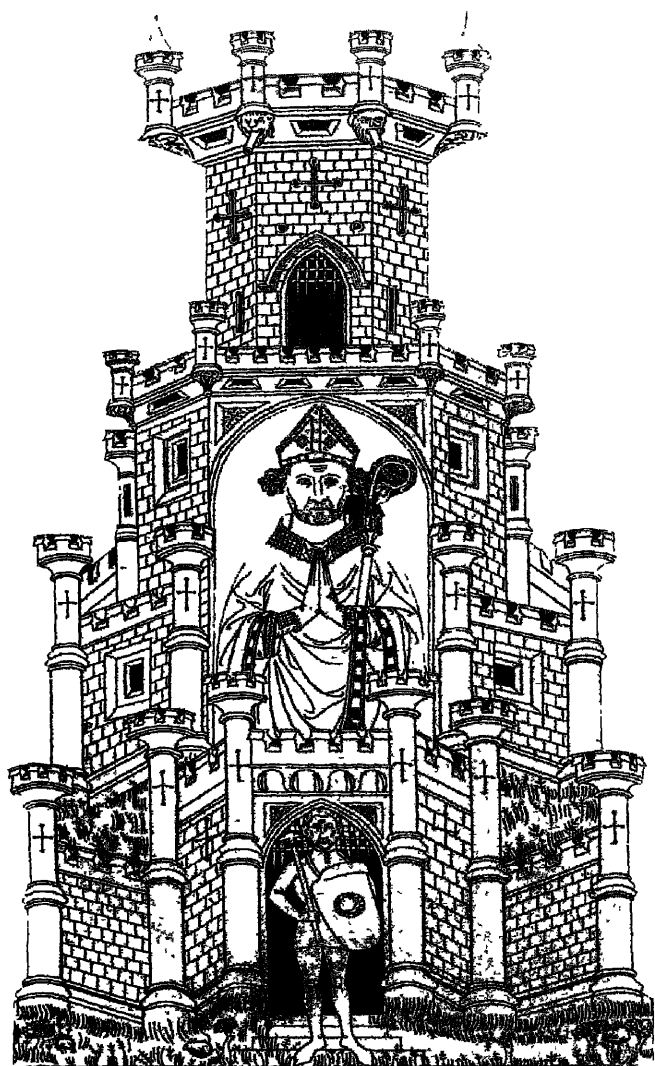
From *Bishop Cantlupe's Register*, f. 32 b (Cantlupe Soc. p. 104), or *Roll of Bishop Swinfield* (Camden Soc., Append. No. 1). This champion was not in fact called on to fight in this particular dispute for the Chases of Colwall and Ledbury, St. Thomas Cantlupe won his case in the ordinary course of justice, and a trench along the crest of the Malvern Hills still marks the boundary set between his chase and Gilbert de Clare's. Thomas appears in fact to have drawn double the covenanted salary of the entry printed in Swinfield's Roll, p. 125. "Paid to the Champion Thomas de Brugge for his three terms' fee—viz. for Michaelmas 1288, the following Easter, and for the following Michaelmas—20 shillings."

40. A BISHOP'S CHAMPION

To all faithful in Christ, Thomas, by the grace of God Bishop of Hereford, prayeth eternal salvation in the Lord. Know ye all that we are bound to Thomas de Bruges [or

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Brydges] our Champion, for his homage and service, in the sum of 6s. 8d. sterling, to be paid yearly from our treasury, wheresoever we may then be, on the feast of St Michael, so long as the said Thomas is able to do the work of a Champion; and the said Thomas hath promised to us upon oath that he will fight for us, whensoever called upon, against the Lord Gilbert earl of Gloucester and Hereford, or any other man, those lords only excepted to whom he was bound before the making of this present deed. And we for our part will fully satisfy the said Thomas, when he must fight for us, according as may be agreed upon between us and him, both in wages and in supply of victuals and all other necessities. In testimony whereof we have caused our seal to be set on this deed. Given at Westminster, on the Tuesday next following the feast of All Saints, in the year of Grace 1276.



WAGER OF BATTLE AND WITCHCRAFT

The accompanying illustration, from Waller's *Monumental Brasses*, gives the brass of Bishop Wyvil, who held the See of Salisbury from 1330 to 1375 and built the cathedral spire. He recovered the castle of Sherborne, which had been unjustly seized by the Crown since 1139, and had now been transferred to the Earl of Salisbury. "This involved trial by battle. At the appointed time, the champions of the respective parties appeared; but at the last moment letters were brought from the king postponing the combat, and the object was ultimately attained by a payment on the bishop's part of 2500 crowns." The proud and grateful bishop wished his champion to go down to posterity together with himself, armed with the double-pointed pick which the law prescribed for such combats. The inscription ran: "Here leth Robert Wyvill of blessed memory, bishop of this church of Salisbury, who ruled this church peacefully and laudably for more than five-and-forty years. The scattered possessions of the see he prudently gathered together, and kept them when gathered like a watchful shepherd; among his lesser good deeds he recovered, like an intrepid champion, the castle of Sherborne, which had been violently occupied by force of arms for more than two hundred years; and he procured also the restoration to the said church of its Chase of Bere. On the fourth day of September in the year of our Lord 1375, and in the 46th year of his consecration, it pleased the Most High that he should pay his debt to mortality in the Castle aforesaid upon whose soul may the Almighty have mercy, in Whom he hoped and believed." This extract (from the *Year Books of Edward III*, Anno xxix, Hilary Term, Case No. 34) gives the story in full; the *Salisbury* castle of this report is evidently a clerical error for *Sherborne*. For similar incidents we may compare the entry of the Worcester annalist under the year 1275 (*Anglia Sacra*, vol. I, p. 501): "On the 26th of June there was a duel in Hardwick meadow for the church of Tenbury, but peace was made and the church left in possession of the Abbot of Lyre. On the 9th of July a duel was fought for the bailiwick of Hembury, and the bishop's champion conquered the champion of Philip de Stock." Many other interesting details as to judicial duels may be found in George Nelson's *Trial by Combat* (1890) and J. Hewitt's *Ancient Armour*, vol. I, p. 375, vol. II, p. 342.

41. WAGER OF BATTLE AND WITCHCRAFT

A BRIEF of Right was brought by the Bishop of Salisbury against the Earl of Salisbury, whereby the bishop claimeth the castle of Salisbury with its appurtenances. And last term they joined issue between the champions, Robert S. being the bishop's champion and Nicholas D. the earl's; and the fight was fixed for the morrow of the Purification. And the

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Court bade them have their champions harnessed in leather and ready to do battle that same day. And early on the morrow the bishop came first, and his champion followed him to the bar clad in white leather next his skin, and over it a coat of red sendal painted with the bishop's arms, and a knight to bear his staff and a serving-man to bear his target, which was of like colour with his coat, painted with images both without and within; and the bishop stood at the bar with his champion by his side, the knight bearing his staff. And [Justice] Thorp made the champion raise the target upon his back, so that the top of the target once passed the crown of his head, and thus it was held on the champion's back so long as he stood at the bar. Then came the earl on the other part leading by the hand his champion who was clad in white leather, over which a coat of red sendal with the earl's coat-of-arms, and two knights bearing two white staves in their hands; and the target was held on the champion's back even as the target of the bishop's champion. [Then said] Knyvet, "For plaintiff ye have here Robert Bishop of Salisbury with his free man, Robert son of John de S., in leather harness, to prove and perform, with God's grace, that which the court of our Lord the king hath already awarded or shall award; this I proffer now to William Earl of Salisbury, and we pray that he be summoned." [Then said] Fyff, "Ye have here William Earl of Salisbury with his free man N. son of D., all ready harnessed, willing to perform, by God's grace, whatsoever the court of our lord King awardeth or shall award." [Then said Justice] Grene, "My lord bishop, go and take a chamber within this palace and strip your champion, and leave there all his harness under ward of the palace-warden, and the court will see to it, so that there may be neither fraud nor deceit. And you, sir Earl, go in like manner into another chamber"; (and it was commanded to the palace-warden to give them rooms,) "and keep your days here on Monday." And the court said, "Go and retire ye from the bar at one time, so that neither go before the other": and, since neither would withdraw before the other, they stood there until the Justices removed them; which they had much ado to perform. At the day appointed came the bishop

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and the earl with their champions, as before; but meanwhile the Justices had viewed all the harness, so that the staves might be of one length, that is of five quarters [of an ell?], and the targes of the same length and breadth, and the images. And two men stripped both champions of their harness. And the lord Thomas Beauchamp came to the place and set forth a letter under privy seal to the Justices, rehearsing the matter of the plea betwixt the parties. and, seeing that this toucheth somewhat on the king's right, he commanded the justices to adjourn that plea in the same state wherein it now standeth, until the Thursday next following [Then said] Grene, "Seeing that the King hath bidden us adjourn this plea, and considering also that in searching the harness of you champions we have found certain defects whereof we know not yet whether they have been amended or no, keep your day here on Thursday next in the same plight as now." And it was said that the Justices had found in Shawel's coat, (who was the bishop's champion), several rolls of prayers and witchcrafts. Wherefore Grene said as aforesaid, "and withdraw now from the bar"; and since neither would part before the other, they stood there long until the justices removed them as before. And Grene said to the claimant, "Sir Bishop, withdraw now from the bar under pain of losing your plea"; whereupon he withdrew. And, before the day appointed, they accorded together, so that the bishop paid the earl 1,500 marks. So on Thursday the bishop came with his champion in leather harness as before; and the earl was called, and came not, and his default was recorded. . . . Wherefore it was awarded by the Court that the bishop should recover the Castle of Salisbury, as the right of the church of Our Lady of Salisbury, for himself and his successors, quit of all claim from the earl and his heirs in all perpetuity.

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Robert de Graystones, Subprior of Durham, was canonically elected and actually consecrated to that bishopric in 1333; but the Pope had meanwhile "provided" Richard de Bury with the prize, and the king gave his assent. Bury, one of the most learned of the English bishops and the probable author of the *Philobiblon*, honourably commends the learning and worth of his unsuccessful rival; and Robert himself tells the story with great impartiality. He did not long outlive his disappointment, his *Chronicle* ends in 1336. The following extracts are from the Surtees Society edition, *Hist. Dunelm Scriptt. Tres.*

42. THE BISHOP AND HIS MOTHER

(Robert of Holy-Isle, Bishop from 1274 to 1283, p. 57)

It is said that, when raised to the bishopric, he honoured his mother, who had been a very poor woman, with menservants and maidservants and respect and luxury. So upon a time he went to visit her, saying, "How is it with thee, Mother?" "Nay, ill indeed," quoth she. "What, dear Mother, is there aught that you lack, in menservants or maidservants or necessary expenses?" "Nay," quoth she, "I have enough: but when I say to this man 'Go!' he hasteneth thither; and to another 'Come!' then he will fall on his knees before me; and all are so obedient to my slightest nod, that I have not wherewith to let my heart swell. When I was a poor old woman, and came down to the waterside to wash tripe or clothes or the like, then some neighbour would come, and the occasion would soon be given; first we would scold, and then tear each other's hair, and fight with fists and chitterlings and monifaundes;¹ nor can those precious electuaries or syrups which you send unto me work as those things worked for the expanding and purging of my heart; nay, when the poison is suppressed then it is all the more harmful, but when we can belch it forth we are relieved by the very act."

This same bishop came once to Norham, where the Lord Scremerston sent him a present of ale; which though the bishop had never drunk for many years now past, yet for reverence of the sender and for the noble report of the ale he tasted thereof: then, unable to bear it, he was seized with

¹ "The intestines or bowels; *spec.* the manyplies, or third stomach of a ruminant" (*O.E.D.*).

THE BISHOP AND HIS MOTHER

a sickness and must needs hasten from the table. Wherefore, after dinner, he called together his familiars and said, "Ye know how humble was my origin, and how neither my birth nor my country taught me to love wine, but only use and long custom. Yet now I am so accustomed thereunto that I cannot taste this ale, my natural drink, for custom is a second nature." When he was Prior of Finchale, he had a special friendship for a certain forester, John Madur by name, who would oftentimes bring him venison [from the bishop's parks], but, when he was promoted to the see, and this same man looked to have had some reward from the bishop for the service that he had done to the prior, then his lordship cast him forth from his office, saying, "He would serve me as unfaithfully as he served my predecessor: as the poet saith, 'Such base deeds as were done yesterday, the same may be done to-morrow.'"

43. A LORDLY BISHOP

(p. 64.)

THIS Anthony [Bek, bishop 1283-1311] was great hearted, second to none in the realm, save the king only, in pomp and bearing and might of war, busy rather about the affairs of the kingdom than of his diocese, a powerful ally to the king in battle, and prudent in counsel. In the Scottish war he had once 26 knights-banneret in his own train, and he had commonly 140 knights in his following, so that men deemed him rather a secular prince than a priest or bishop. Moreover, though he delighted to be thus surrounded with knights, yet he bore himself towards them as though he heeded them not. For to him it was a small thing that the greatest earls and barons of the realm should kneel before him, or that, while he remained seated, knights should stand long and tediously before him like servants. Nothing was too dear for him, if only it might magnify his glory. He once paid forty shillings¹ in London for forty fresh herrings, because the other great folk there assembled in Parliament said that they were too

¹ *I.e.* £40 modern money.

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dear and cared not to buy them. He bought cloth of the rarest and costliest, and made it into horse-cloths for his palfreys, because one had said that he believed Bishop Anthony dared not buy so precious a stuff. Impatient of repose, and scarce resting on his bed beyond his first sleep, he said that they who turned from side to side deserved not the name of man. He settled in no place, but would go round perpetually from manor to manor, from north to south and back again; he was a mighty hunter with hawk and hound. Moreover, despite his great and manifold expenses, he was never in want, but abounded in all things unto the day of his death. He scarce ate in company; he lived most chastely, scarce gazing fixedly on any woman's face, wherefore, when the body of St William of York was translated, while the other bishops feared to touch his bones, their conscience pricking them for past sins, he laid his hand boldly on the holy relics, and wrought reverently all that the matter required. . . . On the second summons [of the Pope], the bishop came to the court of Rome, but with such magnificence and so lordly a bearing that all marvelled at his retinue and his lavish generosity. One day when he was riding through the city of Rome to the court, a certain count of those parts, coming in the other direction and passing the bishop's train, stood a while in admiration and asked one of the citizens: "Who is this that goeth by?" "A foe to money," quoth that citizen. To a certain cardinal who desired one of his palfreys (for he had the fairest in the world) he sent two, that the cardinal might take his choice; and he, seduced by their beauty, retained both. When this was reported to the bishop, he said, "So save me God! he hath not failed to choose the better of the two!" He was so high-minded that he thought he might without blame do whatsoever he would, therefore he refrained not for the cardinals' presence from giving benediction, nor for the Pope's presence from playing with his hawks. As he went towards Rome, and lodged in a certain city, there arose a discussion between his men and the townsfolk. At last, when the whole city was risen up against him and his men could not longer hold out in their lodging, then the door of the bishop's chamber was broken open and the Podesta rushed in with the great men of that

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city, bearing swords and staves as against a thief, and crying, "Yield thee, yield thee!" He therefore neither rose from his seat nor deferred to them in any wise, but said, "So save me God! ye have failed to say to whom I am to yield me certainly to none of you" All his followers looked for no issue but death, yet he answered as boldly as though there had been no danger, though he would indeed have been slain but that there came by chance [*hiatus in MS.*]. It was on this same journey that, when one of his train asked of the price of a very costly cloth, the merchant answered that he believed the bishop would not buy so precious a stuff; which when the bishop heard, he bought the cloth, and under the merchant's eyes made horse-cloths thereof for his palfreys. Wherefore the Pope and cardinals honoured him for his highmindedness and lavishness...[He gained his cause and] returned to England with an honourable farewell from the Pope and his court.

The *Gesta Abbatum S. Albani* is a chronicle of the abbots of that great house compiled about 1350 by Thomas Walsingham, precentor of the abbey and last of the great English chroniclers. The writer had access to the wide collection of documents in his abbey, the *Gesta* extends from 793 to 1349, and Walsingham's own *Historia Anglicana* goes down to 1422. The edition of the *Gesta* here used is that published in the Rolls Series; it is brilliantly summarized by Froude in one of his *Short Studies* (Annals of an English Abbey).

William de Somerton, whose Priory of Binham in Norfolk was a cell to St Albans, rebelled in 1327 with six of his monks against the abbot's extortions. The six monks were clapped into prison at St Albans, but Somerton escaped to Rome.

44. A MONASTIC ALCHEMIST

(Vol II, p. 132.)

FOR the benefit of posterity I have thought fit to describe here the manners of the aforesaid William of Somerton, that those to come might beware of being branded with the same. He was greedy above measure, hunting after money as eagerly as he wasted it lavishly, whence it chanced that he contracted

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a familiar friendship with a certain mendicant friar, who promised to multiply his moneys beyond all computation by the art which men call Alchemy, if only the prior spared none of the needful expenses at the beginning of his art. To whose words the prior lent too credulous an ear, and lavished such sums of gold and silver as might have brought even the richest to poverty. Yet even so he learned not to beware of the perils of false brethren; for, having lost once, he continued even unto the third time, pouring such plenty of gold and silver into this unprofitable work, that now scarce anything was left of the whole substance of his monastery, wherewith he might have made a fourth contribution. Wherefore it came about that, what with the abbot's former extortions from that priory, and what with the prior's present waste of its substance, nothing more was left in the house to supply the monks' necessities. So this William, slipping off into apostasy, fled hastily to the court of Rome: where, in so far as opportunity served him, he sought to prosecute his cause, and to thwart the abbot to the best of his ability, now by falsehoods, now by colourable pleas, now by the prayers of noble persons, especially of the Earl of Hereford. . . . When however he heard [that the abbot had obtained a sentence of outlawry against him] then, grieving not so much for his priory as for his banishment from England, he presently plied gifts, promises, and prayers all at once, and enticed to his side everyone of the cardinals or others whom he knew to be thirsty for gold, giving much and promising more, until he had obtained from the Apostolic See a personal citation of the abbot himself to Rome. . . . But the abbot escaped by a miracle (if I may so speak) from the need of undertaking so arduous a journey, to the grievous harm both of his monastery and of his body. Wherefore the aforesaid William (after a long and dispendious stay at the Roman Court, after much and unavailing waste of money, after many bulls obtained on his behalf, . . . seeing that his wiles profited him little or naught in all these matters,) obtained, as it is reported, other bulls more favourable to his part, wherewith he purposed to return home. When therefore he was come to London, he was searched and arrested by the king's serjeants, who favoured the abbot and had perchance

A MONASTIC ALCHEMIST

been hired by him for this purpose; and by royal command he was brought before the king at Marlborough. So he was caught in the manner and city aforesaid, in a secular habit and without tonsure. The king sent him back by the sheriff to London, there to be kept in ward till he had sent word to the abbot of his royal pleasure in this matter. Soon afterwards he caused him to be delivered to the abbot's custody, to be guarded body for body, until the abbot should hear further from the king concerning this matter. But what those bulls contained which he is said to have brought, the abbot alone knoweth, and He to Whom all things are known. . . . [Meanwhile powerful friends pleaded for Somerton, not without covert threats.] Wherefore after no long interval, at the instance of the Lady Isabella our queen, and others to whose prayers it were unsafe not to defer, since (as the poet saith) the great man supplicates with naked sword—therefore the aforesaid William was loosed from prison and restored to his Priory of Binham, albeit the abbot had been firmly purposed to deal otherwise with him.

These things we record, not as defending the aforesaid cause, which indeed is criminal and damnable, but that posterity may see how great dissensions, what hatred, what damages, follow from the greed and covetousness of prelates. For both the lord abbot wasted the substance of St Albans with grievous expenses for the prosecution of his cause, and the prior himself did irreparable harm to his priory in defence of his own case. In truth, he alienated the two best chalices of his church, which were worth far more than all those that were left, together with six copes, three chasubles, two mass-phials and a silver censer, cloths of silk, and seven golden rings which had been offered aforetime by pious folk, and silver goblets and spoons, alas! nor did he spare the silver cup and crown wherein the Lord's Body was wont to hang over the high altar; these also he alienated for the aforesaid cause.

Nevertheless, though this William was restored to Binham Priory as aforesaid; yet after that he had dwelt there a few years in great poverty, and had marked how the priory goods sufficed not for paying the pensions which he had so lavishly promised to the knights and other gentles of the countryside

LIFE IN THE MIDDLE AGES

for the defence of his cause, then [in 1335] he was pierced with the dart of shame and fled, repeating (horrible to relate!) his former apostasy, and leaving that priory in abject poverty; [stripped of farms and churches to the value of 900 marks, and burdened with a debt of £400].

[P. 203.] Yet, within a brief space, this William of Somerton, wearied with his wicked life, and touched by God's grace after his second apostasy, came back as a suppliant to the gate of St Albans Abbey, and there threw himself down according to the custom.¹ When therefore he had sat there some hours, the Abbot Michael, a man of abundant bowels of mercy, was moved with compassion for him and sent his seneschal, John of Munden, to bring him into the almonry. There he dwelt five weeks by reason of a sickness which fell upon him; after which time he recovered and came to the abbey gate, there to begin his public penance, casting himself on the ground and deploring his wretched state. The abbot therefore pitied his infirmity, and (contrary to the wonted custom of the abbey) suffered him to lie in his woollen shirt, but for which he must have lain there naked save only his drawers.² So then he was received and admitted to mercy, after that he had earned his absolution from the major excommunication which by his apostasy he had incurred, and a penance was inflicted upon him according to the Rule and in proportion to the heinousness of his offences; which when he had humbly laboured to fulfil, he was afterwards fully absolved from the same.

¹ For an apostate begging readmission, see Martène, *Comment. in Regulam*, pp 389 ff

² The editorial side-note misinterprets this passage, as if it referred to the dormitory and not to the public penance.

A POET'S COMPLAINT OF THE BLACKSMITHS

45. A POET'S COMPLAINT OF THE BLACKSMITHS

From MS Arundel, 292, f 72 vo, fourteenth century.

(*Reliquiae Antiquae*, vol. 1, p 240)

SWART smuttet smiths, smattered with smoke,
Drive me to death with din of their dints;
Such noise on nights ne heard men never,
What [with] knaven cry and clattering of knocks!
The crooked caitiffs cryen after col! col!
And blownen their bellows that all their brain bursteth.
Huf! puf! saith that one; haf! paf! that other;
They spitten and sprawlen and spellen many spells¹
They gnawen and gnashen, they groan all together,
And holden them hot with their hard hammers.
Of a bull-hide be their barm-fells,²
Their shanks be shackled for the fiery flinders;
Heavy hammers they have that hard be handled,
Stark strokes they striken on a steely stock,
Lus! bus! las! das! snore they by the row,
Such doleful a dream the devil it to-drive!
The master loungeth a little, and catcheth a less,
Twineth them twain and toucheth a treble,³
Tik! tak! hic! hac! tiket! taket! tyk! tyk!
Lus! bus! lus! das! . . . Christ them give sorrow!
May no man for brenn-waters⁴ on night have his rest.

¹ Tell many tales.

² Leathern apron

³ The master pauses, catches up a smaller hammer, and intertwines [or perhaps separates] the bass of the sledge-hammer with his own lighter treble.

⁴ For the hissing of the steel in the trough of water.

LIFE IN THE MIDDLE AGES

The fullest details of du Guesclin's life are recorded in the lengthy poem of the Picard trouvère Cuveher (23,000 lines). This has come down to us in a longer and a shorter text; I have taken the liberty of choosing one or the other as it suited my present purpose, and of omitting here and there the trouvère's digressions or repetitions.

46. THE UGLY DUCKLING

(T 1, p. 5.)

[THE Knight] Renaud du Guesclin was Bertrand's father, and his mother a most gentle lady and most comely; but for the boy of whom I tell you, methinks there was none so hideous from Rennes to Dinant. Flat-nosed he was and dark of skin, heavy and froward, wherefore his parents hated him so sore that often in their hearts they wished him dead, or drowned in some swift stream; *Rascal*, *Fool*, or *Clown* they were wont to call him, so despised was he, as an ill-conditioned child, that squires and servants made light of him, but we have oftentimes seen, in this world of vain shadows, that the most despised have been the greatest. . . .

So when he had fulfilled eight or nine years, he took a custom of his own, as I will here tell. Many a time and oft he would go play in the fields, gathering around him forty or fifty boys, whom he would divide into companies and make them fight as at a tournament—yea, and so fiercely that one would rudely overthrow the other. When therefore Bertrand saw his fellows overthrown before his face, to their great hurt, then would he run and help them to rise, saying, "Haste now, avenge yourself well and boldly on that other!" Thus he skilfully kept up the fight and the tourney by thrusting himself among them, as hounds tear wolves with their teeth, so he would overthrow even the great ones and bruise them sore, and they knew him by this token, that all his clothes were torn and his body bleeding. Truly I declare that he made no account of his own blood; thus would he cry aloud, "Guesclin to the rescue!" and maintain the fight so long that none knew which side had the victory. When therefore all were glutted with fighting, then he would bid them cease, and say in a soft voice: "Come, good fellows all, let us go privily and drink all

THE UGLY DUCKLING

together as good friends; I will pay, so long as there is a penny in my purse. If any have not wherewithal, I will cheerfully stand surety for him, if I lend to any, and he repay it, then will I never love him so long as my youth shall last; if mine host will trust me, soon shall he be paid, even though I must take a silver cup from my father's house or go sell a good mare at Rennes, my lord [father] would ransom more than an hundred " "God!" said the boys within themselves, "to what wisdom will this Bertrand grow! God Almighty send him good speed, that this good beginning may come to full honour!"

When Bertrand came back from such company all bruised and torn and merry at heart, then his mother would say in grief and wrath: "In sooth, wretched boy, this is a foul life that you lead; little does it show of the noble lineage from which you come. . . .¹ If ever again you return in this guise, you shall repent it all the days of your life. . . ." But on the morrow Bertrand would do half as ill again. . . . When his father Renaud knew the truth, whence he was come and what he wrought there, then he straitly charged the peasants that no child in all the country round should follow his son; or if any so follow him, then shall the father pay a fine of five pounds. Then all the children were so sad and so abashed that they fled at Bertrand's approach; and when he saw this, he would catch and assail them and oftentimes compel them to wrestle against their will. So his father heard complaints on all sides, and oftentimes the mother that bare him cursed her child, shedding bitter tears, and saying to her lord that naught would ever avail until he should cast his son into prison. So to prison he went, where they brought him meat and drink and all that he needed: a good four times was he thus in ward, but little he recked for all that. It befel that a chambermaid brought his dinner and unlocked the door; forthwith he seized her, and took her keys, and shut her in and took his leave. The bird was gone; so cunningly did he hide that none could find him, wheresoever they might search. Then one morning he fled hastily till he came to a field that he knew full well, there he found a ploughman toiling in the furrow with two of Sir Renaud's mares. Bertrand bestrode the one and fled; yet as

LIFE IN THE MIDDLE AGES

he went the bondman cried: "Alas, Bertrand!" quoth he, "this is an ill deed, I dare not now look your father in the face, bring back the mare, for St Benet's sake!" But Bertrand laughed aloud, for he made little account of such words.

Then rode Bertrand full gallop on his mare, that had neither shoes nor bridle, harness nor saddle: he rode on the rough hair, and galloped as though he would break her back. When his father knew this, his head grew hot with anger, and he would gladly have seen his son drowned in the salt sea. Meanwhile Bertrand rode as one who recked nought of all this, and came to stately Rennes to an uncle who had married his aunt, a wealthy dame and well furnished with worldly goods. When his aunt saw him, she was grieved in her soul and said, "Bertrand, you have such a repute as cuts your mother to the heart, and your father too—God keep him whole! This is great folly, by the glorious Virgin, that you live so wayward a life and so unworthy of your lineage." "Lady," quoth the husband, "you speak as a simple woman, it is meet and right that youth should have his way; for all that we may say, it must slough its first skin. He is young enough yet, by the glorious Virgin! to have sense and honour in days to come. He hath done neither crime nor lawless deed; we have good wine and well-salted meat, whereof he shall have his part so long as it shall last." "Uncle," said Bertrand, "I hold with you! Your will shall be done both morn and even." "Truly," said his aunt, "ye have found a fair word; but, so God help me! my heart and mind tell me well that you will trouble us before six months be past."

Bertrand dwelt peaceably with his uncle; he constrained himself as best he could to wander neither hither nor thither; oftentimes he rode abroad with his uncle, and kept good company to his aunt also. Thus three months were well-nigh past, and he had joined in no sport. Then it came to pass that a prize was proclaimed for the best wrestler; and when he heard this tidings—the day was fixed for Sunday after dinner, and the place was ordained—then Bertrand's fair aunt called to her nephew, and prayed him softly to go with her to church and hear the sermon, whereof she had a pious thirst. Bertrand, will-he, nill-he, went with his aunt: but he slipped from her

THE UGLY DUCKLING

side when the sermon began, and came to the place where the wrestling was already begun. Some comrades were there who knew him. "Ho, Bertrand!" they cried, "your jolly body shall wrestle here; look ye, my masters, here is he who will throw all the rest!" "Gentles," said Bertrand, "I may not wrestle to-day, unless ye all pledge your faith, so many as are here, to say no word to mine aunt, for in truth, should she hear thereof, she would beat me." The good fellows swore to discover him neither thus nor otherwise; then began the wrestling, and long it endured. Bertrand was still a stripling under age—he had but seventeen years, if the tale be true—but he was short and thickset and big of bone. He beheld a Breton, a proud wrestler, who had thrown many of his fellows, twelve had he thrown, himself unconquered! Then came Bertrand and gripped him without more ado: now stood he not long unmoved, for Bertrand played on him a subtle trip, by force and wily craft he laid him on the ground: yet he drew Bertrand with him; but the Breton was undermost, grieved at heart, and Bertrand had the upper hand and the mastery over him. Yet went it ill with him in his fall, for he fell upon a rough sharp flint-stone, which cut through his knee, that the blood ran down. Hastily he rose to his feet; but he could no longer hold himself up for his weight in silver: "Ay me!" quoth Bertrand, "now am I in evil case, for my fair aunt will know all the trick I played her, it were better for me to be even at the sermon! Gentles," (quoth Bertrand) "for God's majesty let me be borne to mine aunt's house: but first of all my wound must be dressed."¹ Then they bore him to a leech with the noble prize on his head—a fair chaplet of gold and silver and cunning workmanship. "Ha, God!" quoth Bertrand, "by God's majesty take off this chaplet, for I am in no dancing mood!" . . .

Now was Bertrand in bed for all his fretting; then came his aunt and began to cry fie upon him: "Certes, Bertrand," said she, "you are nothing worth! You shame your knightly birth in wrestling thus with common folk better to take your joy and solace in following tourneys, since you are thus bent

¹ Here and again on p. 39, where the Editor reads the verb *remuer* this is an obvious misreading for *remuer*.

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upon showing your prowess." "Lady," said Bertrand, "I pray you be not wroth, and I swear to the just God our Father, so soon as I may well ride again I will follow jousts and tourneys, and wrestle no more; you shall see me fully whole again in eight days." There the gentle squire spake truth; for on the ninth day he was hale and sound. Then they made peace between Bertrand and his father, and his mother also, whom Bertrand loved right heartily. Bertrand went to see them in their high hall, and came right close to his mother; for he is bent on having jewels, silver, and fine gold to buy harness and a noble war-horse withal. Yea, he said openly that, if his mother set not her money thereto, he would break her coffer and take her jewel-casket. So spake Bertrand, and worked so well that his mother, his aunt, and his friends gave him harness, a shield, and a spear, with an ambling hackney that was not too good. Not a joust nor a tourney was held now in Brittany, if only Bertrand heard tidings thereof, but he would ride thither on the best mare that his father had: for his little hackney endured but a brief while; so soon as he lacked money, he sold his own steed, and then fell back on his father for a mare; jewels too he would take where he knew to find them, and freely he would sell them when he came to the lists. If he heard of a dinner of noble array, then he would take wine and send it to the house where he knew the squires: in the name of Bertrand du Guesclin the wine would be served up; all then made him good cheer, all feasted him well. He was but seventeen years old when he bore himself thus; so he won much acquaintance, and all men honoured him.

CAPTURE OF THE CASTLE OF FOUGERAY

The most brilliant exploit of Du Guesclin's earlier career, (while he was only a guerilla captain in his thirtieth year,) was this capture, at a moment when the castellan, Robert Brembro, was absent on an expedition. Bertrand and his men disguised themselves as a party of wood-cutters with their wives, bringing faggots for sale at the castle.

47. CAPTURE OF THE CASTLE OF FOUGERAY

(*Ib.* p. 35, A.D. 1350)

THEN each man hid his armour and his sword, and loaded himself with brushwood bound in faggots. Full thirty of them are together in the main band, and several more are posted in the valley; the band divides into four parts, and their plan is clearly ordered. Bertrand, in front, bore on his shoulders a great load of true faggots, as all would say who had seen him that day: manfully he strode forward to reach the castle. The men of the castle are aware now of the strangers, and the watchman has sounded his horn; Bertrand's comrades hear them assemble, and many among them would rather be now in the salt sea. But they mark how Bertrand has quickened his step; it were better to go on in good faith without faltering, already in his forward thoughts Bertrand saw himself in the castle, seated in the tapestried room and setting the flesh to roast before the great fire! Meanwhile his comrades, straggling behind, carrying their brushwood and faggots, dare neither to turn back nor to fall away for Bertrand's sake, whom they see drawing near to the castle. "Gentles!" said Bertrand, "have a care that ye do your work; this night ye shall sup with me in the castle, and I will give you wine of the best in the cellar." Yet some said, "God vouchsafe us His help! methinks they will sell us this wine right dearly": for the watchman with his horn dismayed them all, wherefore Bertrand began to sing for the comfort of their spirits.

Meanwhile the men of the castle took counsel together: "We must open the castle," said they, "to take these faggots in, for we have need thereof. These are the woodmen who come and supply us, and their wives also, straight come from church; lo! they are clad in white. Let us go and unbar the

LIFE IN THE MIDDLE AGES

doors; these are no folk that know aught of war; great folly would it be to fear them." Then they gave word forthwith to the porter, who went to open the gate and let down the bridge; hastily he went, with but three men at his back; soon the gate was unbarred, and the chains fell. Then Bertrand came first under the vaulted arch, and cast down his load at the gate; right on the threshold he cast down his great load of faggots, so that none could bar his further entry. Then he cried, "Ah, whoreson knaves! ye shall buy this wood dear; I will heat the vessels for your bath, but it shall be in your own blood, which I will draw from your veins!" Therewith he drew his blade of tempered steel and smote the porter withal; little he spared him, but cleft through brainpan and half-way to the chine: then he cried his rough war-cry, "Guesclin!—forward, my friends, leave your loads, cast all to earth and come to my succour: here is good wine within, that needs but the tapping." Then said his fellows, "He is a good stark warrior!" Over the bridge they came like good knights: now the gate is won, and they pain them to press on. Down rushed the English in hot wrath, full a hundred men in all—cooks and turnspits, boys and varlets, and good men at arms. they came about Bertrand like bees, and cast great flint-stones to smite him down. . . . An English squire raised his axe and smote one of Bertrand's comrades on the ear; wherewith he fell asleep on the highroad, never to wake again for all that men might cry in his ear. To him Bertrand came without more ado, and drove with his bright sword through lungs and liver at a single thrust: down he fell dead. Bertrand seized the axe; he would not have given it up for all the gold of Pavia; "Guesclin!" he cried, "the day is ours!" He drove the English into a sheep-pen; there was he shut in on every side with cooks and buttery-boys, pantlers and grooms and suchlike rabble; one wielded a pitchfork, another a pointed pole, many a shrewd stroke he had from spit and pestle, but all his fellows gave him good help. Then it might have sped ill with their bodies and lives, but up there rode a troop of horse, drawn to the castle by the shouting of the fray. When therefore the horsemen were come by the gate where Bertrand's men had mounted, then these cried aloud to them:

CAPTURE OF THE CASTLE OF FOUGERAY

"Enter not herein but if ye be of the party of Charles de Blois! If ye be English, go your way with all speed, ye are but dead men if ye tarry here; for here is the noble du Guesclin with five hundred French, confessing the English of their sins!" "Ha, God!" cried these French, "it is he whom we sought!" . . . Meanwhile Bertrand was hard bested: not a shred of his harness but was broken in pieces, and his blood reddened the earth, for the English smote upon him with axe and spear, thrusting and hewing to make an end of his life; "Guesclin!" he cried, for he had sore need of help. Then said one to another: "Mark his fury! never was such a squire as this in the wide world!" Then, seeing how hard he was pressed, they said: "Let us go straight to him; ours were the blame if such a champion were slain." Bertrand was now at such a pass as no tongue can tell; he had lost his axe, and defended himself with his two hands, then came a knight who knew him well, and broke through the press sword in hand, he cleared around him so wide a space that he came to Bertrand and cried, "Squire, come hither and follow me forthwith." Bertrand saw nought for the blood that blinded his eyes. Men drew him apart, and all were fain to dress his wounds; one would have bound up his sores, another wiped his face, but he was so wroth to be thus held that he would not suffer them to do him good. Yet when this troop was come to the rescue, then they slew outright all that they found in the castle. . . then forthwith they closed the gates, let down the bridge, and sent for wine to pass round among themselves. . . . Each made ready to eat and drink, Bertrand drank the good wine and took good heart, for he had good wine to his fill, and drank with the rest.

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John of France was prisoner in England; the castle of Melun had been surprised by Charles the Bad, King of Navarre, who was now an ally of the English. Three queens were in the castle, which was defended by Bertrand's old enemy the Bascon de Mareuil. The Dauphin, or Duke of Normandy, soon to be King Charles the Wise, commanded the siege in person; the still existing treasury-accounts show that he drew from his arsenal 20,000 crossbow-bolts, 10,000 arrows, and two great cannons for this occasion; and here for the first time he witnessed the prowess of du Guesclin, who in later years was his chief instrument in driving the English out of France.

48. THE SIEGE OF MELUN

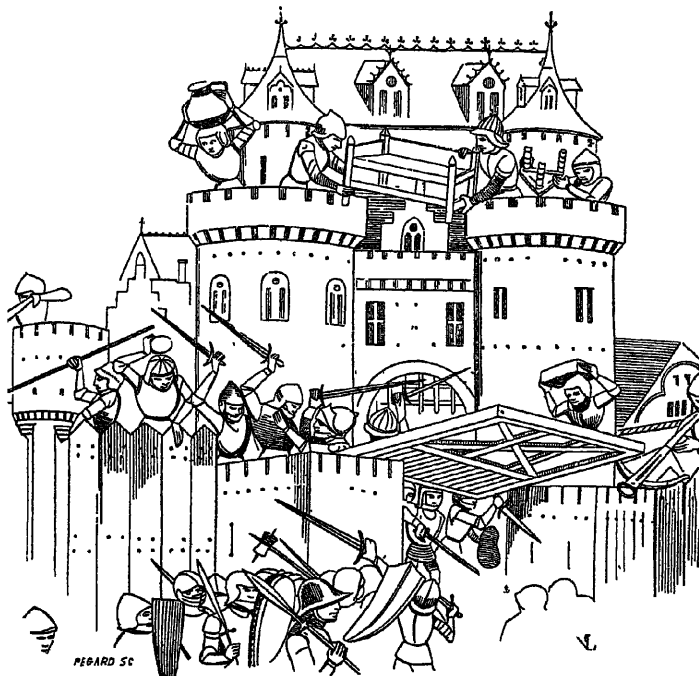
(*Ib.* p. 126, A.D. 1359.)

THEN the Duke of Normandy prepared for a general assault. . . . On the morrow his men were drawn up on the sand; in the van were ranged the good crossbowmen, having great shields to cover themselves withal; and the garrison for their part took their appointed posts. Then began the general assault, that it was wonder to see. The Bastard of Mareuil and all his soldiers stood unabashed on the wall; they hurled down stones to maim our men, and shot their bolts as stout crossbowmen, thicker flew the bolts than winter rain. The Bastard spared nought: down he cast the stones like a stout workman, none could behold him without dismay. Bertrand at last perceived the Knight, and cried: "Ha, God! good Father of Justice, never was I so thirsty for drink nor for meat as my soul thirsteth now to come to hand-grips with that man; gladly would I try his flesh with this dagger of mine!"

Valiantly our men maintained the assault, stoutly men shot, and down they cast their stones; into the moat they plunged, some four hundred or more, bearing ladders to set against the walls; but many a man went up who was sore grieved at heart. The Bastard, fulfilled of all valour, cried aloud, "Shoot ye down there, or ye are lost!" But sore was the assault, and long was it sustained. The Duke leaned at his window hard by and made his complaint to the one true God: "Now is this realm of France confounded; now is the King my father, the noble, the redoubtable, kept a prisoner in England. . . . Now forward!" said the Duke, "and labour with a good will; assault them sore, cost what cost may!"

THE SIEGE OF MELUN

Then might ye see many a noble knight rush mightily to the assault with shot of shaft and javelin, and strive to rear the ladders against the walls. Those within the castle defended



STORM OF AUBENTON

From an early fifteenth-century MS. reproduced in Viollet-le-Duc's *Dict de l'Architecture*, t. I, p. 383. (Note the *barriers*, or outwork of palisades.)

themselves like wild boars; long will the memory live in men's minds. Our Frenchmen must needs give wholly backwards, for the stones that men rolled down from the walls. Bertrand beheld them plunge into the moat to break the wall;

LIFE IN THE MIDDLE AGES

but all in vain, they could not make a mine. Then looked he at the Bastard, at whose sight our men were wholly dismayed: "Ha, God!" cried Bertrand, "may I find thee? By the faith that I ought to bear to Jesus Christ, either ye shall deal with my body in such wise that no succour nor comfort shall ever avail, or I will mount to those battlements, and speak with thee face to face!"

Then Bertrand withdrew a space; a ladder he chose, and reared it in his arms: swiftly and nimbly he laid it on his neck; and, what with others' help, what with his own travail, he set it up to the wall and seized a shield to cover his head. When the Duke saw him, he asked of his people. "Who is this man" (said the Duke) "who thus mounteth yonder?" To whom a knight replied, "Ye have heard long since of Bertrand du Guesclin, whose prowess is so great, and who endured such travail in the wars of Brittany for your cousin Charles the lord of that land." "Is that he," said the Duke, "by God who created us all?" "Yea, sire, by God, never was there so doughty a warrior." "By my head!" said the Duke, "there is a good knight!" Meanwhile Bertrand hath not tarried; he is mounted fearlessly on the ladder. The Bastard of Mareuil was aware of his coming, and cried to his men, who stood thick around him, "Good sirs, do quickly and stay not your hands; bring me forthwith a stone of weight, the weightiest of all that ye can find." Then answered they, "What say ye? Behold, all that ye require is before you: on one side great beams and stout, and on the other barrels filled to the brim with stones; ye may not fail, smite at a venture upon this boor who mounts so sturdily. See how great and short and square he is, big and bulging like a hog in armour! Ah God! how properly he would fall into the moat, and how his heart would burst with the fall! Give him good measure and running over; for in very truth he is fashioned like a Paris street-porter, all bloated under his canvas slop!"

Meanwhile Bertrand came up: small account they made of him; yet those who scoffed knew him but ill. With his shield at his neck and the good blade in his hand, he cried aloud to the Bastard of Mareuil: "Ho, Bastard! let me come forthwith to the battlements, and I will prove that thou

THE SIEGE OF MELUN

commandest here against all right! or come thou down hither into this alder-grove, there will we fight with a right good heart! for I will prove to thee, if that hour come, that thou dost ill and unjustly towards the Duke of Normandy." To this the Bastard gave no friendly word: without further ado he discharged a mighty herring-barrel full of stones plump upon Bertrand as he mounted his ladder. So boisterous was the blow that the ladder brake, and Bertrand fell headlong to the ground: head-foremost plunged he into the moat, where he had leisure to drink his fill: thus he tarried awhile with his two feet in the air. Bertrand was stunned, he knew not where he was; loud cried the Duke: "Succour me my Bertrand, to whom all honour is due; certes, it would be pity that he should die thus!" Then came a squire and drew him by the feet; so long he drew, and so lustily, that he dragged him forth from the water. Forth came Bertrand's head all covered with mud; so stunned was he that he knew not where he was, sooth to say, he seemed more dead than alive. Forth from thence they bore him by main force, and laid him for his comfort within a warm dung-heap, until he came to himself again and stretched his limbs, and asked aloud of those who kept him: "Lordings, what vile devil hath brought me hither? Is our assault come to nought? We must hasten to the front!" "Alas!" said a squire who knew him well: "you have your belly-full, Bertrand, be ye content therewith!" Lightly rose he then from his dung-heap, with a good will to join in the assault. Already some of the French retreated; and men said to Bertrand, "Sir, be advised; go no more to the assault, for within a little while all will be finished." But Bertrand answered that he would go to the barriers, truly he spake it, and truly he went. There was no man so hardy, of all who were there, who would have dared to go whither Bertrand thrust himself forward; sword in hand, and by main force, he drove the foe back to the barriers; many he felled to the earth: then they closed their barriers and raised the drawbridge. Thus long did the assault last; then at nightfall they sounded the retreat until to-morrow's sunrising. Then they held a parley; a treaty was made, and the noble Duke went back to Paris.

LIFE IN THE MIDDLE AGES

Eustache Deschamps, Chaucer's French contemporary and panegyrist, is a voluminous poet who, without much inspiration, gives many vivid pictures of contemporary life. The first of the *balades* here translated voices the complaint, (at least as old as that great growth of material prosperity which marks the thirteenth century) of the growing power of money in the world. The edition quoted is that of the *Société des Anciens Textes Français*.

49. THE ALMIGHTY DOLLAR

(T 1, p. 229.) Balade.

That all men in these days seek only to grow rich.

I FEAR sore that dear times will come, and that we shall have an evil year, when I see many men gather corn together and store it apart. I see the fields fail, the air corrupted, the land in disarray, evil plowing and rotting seed, weakling horses whose labour drags; on the other hand the rich man crieth *Check!* Wherefore poor folk must needs go begging, for no man careth but to fill his bags.

Each man is selfish and covetous in his own fashion; their lives are disordered, all is snatched away by violence of great men, nor doth any creature under the sun seek the common good. Do men govern the land according to reason? Nay! for law is perished, Truth faileth, I see Lying reign among us, and the greatest men are drowned in this lake [of sin]; the earth is ruined by covetise, for no man careth but to fill his bags.

Therefore the innocent must die of hunger, with whom these great wolves daily fill their maw, those who heap up false treasures by the hundred and the thousand. This grain, this corn, what is it but the blood and bones of the poor folk who have ploughed the land? wherefore their spirit crieth on God for vengeance. Woe to the lords, the councillors, and all who steer us thus, and woe to all such as are of their party; for no man careth now but to fill his bags.

L'ENVOY

Prince, short is the span of this life, and a man dieth as suddenly as one may say "clac"; whither will the poor abashed soul go? for no man careth now but to fill his bags.

UNIVERSITY EXPENSES

50 UNIVERSITY EXPENSES

(T VIII, p 96) Balade.

Of the Scholars at Orleans.

THUS runs the Orleans Scholar's Letter: "Well-beloved father, I have not a penny, nor can I get any save through you, for all things at the University are so dear. nor can I study in my Code or my Digest, for they are all tattered. Moreover, I owe ten crowns in dues to the Provost, and can find no man to lend them to me; I send you word of greetings and of money.¹

The Student hath need of many things if he will profit here; his father and his kin must needs supply him freely, that he be not compelled to pawn his books, but have ready money in his purse, with gowns and furs and decent clothing, or he will be damned for a beggar; wherefore, that men may not take me for a beast, I send you word of greetings and of money.

Wines are dear, and hostels, and other good things; I owe in every street, and am hard bested to free myself from such snares. Dear father, deign to help me! I fear to be excommunicated; already have I been cited, and there is not even a dry bone in my larder. If I find not the money before this feast of Easter, the church door will be shut in my face: wherefore grant my supplication, for I send you word of greetings and of money.

L'ENVOY

Well-beloved father, to ease my debts contracted at the tavern, at the baker's, with the doctor and the bedells, and to pay my subscriptions to the laundress and the barber, I send you word of greetings and of money."

¹ There is a pun here. *Salus* meant a kind of gold coin as well as greetings.

LIFE IN THE MIDDLE AGES

Geoffrey de la Tour-Landry fought in the Hundred Years' War at least as early as 1346 and as late as 1383. He wrote in 1371, for the instruction of his daughters, a book which became the most popular educational treatise of the Middle Ages. This "Book of the Knight of the Tower" was translated into German, and at least twice into English, it had passed through seven editions in the three languages before 1550. After Caxton's edition of 1483 there was none in English until it was reprinted in 1868 by T. Wright for the Early English Text Society, from a MS. of Henry VI's reign. It is from this edition that the following extracts are taken.

51. MARITAL AMENITIES

(p. 23.)

I WILL say an ensample that it is an evil thing to a woman to be in jealousy. There was a gentlewoman that was wedded to a squire, and she loved him so much that she was jealous over all women that he spake with; for the which he blamed her often, but it was never the better. And among other she was jealous of a woman that had a great and high heart; and so on a time she reproved that woman with her husband, and she said she said not true; and the wife said she lied. And they ran together and pulled off all that ever was on their heads, and plucked each other by the hair of the head right evil. And she that was accused, caught a staff, and smote the wife on the nose such a stroke that she brake her nose, and that all her life after she had her nose all crooked, the which was a foul maim and blemishing of her visage; for it is the fairest member that man or woman hath, and sitteth in the middle of the visage. And so was the wife fouled and maimed all her life, and her husband said often to her, that it had been better that she had not been jealous, than for to have undone her visage as she had. And also for that defouling of her visage her husband might never find in his heart to love her heartily as he did before, and he took other women, and thus she lost his love through her jealousy and folly. And therefore here is a good example to all good women, that they ought to leave all such fantasies, and suffer and endure patiently their anger, if they have any; . . . Also, a woman ought not to strive with her husband, nor give him no displeasance nor answer her husband before strangers, as did once a woman that did answer her husband before strangers like a rampe,¹ with great

¹ Virago, vixen.

MARITAL AMENITIES

villainous words, dispraising him and setting him at nought; of the which he was often ashamed, and bade her hold her peace for shame, but the more fair he spake, the worse she did. And he, that was angry of her governance, smote her with his fist down to the earth; and then with his foot he struck her in the visage and brake her nose, and all her life after she had her nose crooked, the which shent¹ and disfigured her visage after, that she might not for shame show her visage, it was so foul blemished. And thus she had for her evil and great language, that she was wont to say to her husband. And therefore the wife ought to suffer and let the husband have the words, and to be master, for that is her worship; for it is shame to hear strife between them, and in especial before folk. But I say not but when they be alone, but she may tell him with goodly words, and counsel him to amend if he do amiss. . . .

It happened once there were iij merchants that went homeward from a fair, and as they fell in talking, riding on the way, one of them said, "It is a noble thing for a man to have a good wife that obeyeth and doth his bidding at all times." "By my troth," said that other, "my wife obeyeth me truly." "By God," said that other, "I trow mine obeyeth best to her husband." Then he that began first to speak said, "Let us lay a wager of a dinner, and whose wife that obeyeth worst, let her husband pay for the dinner"; and thus the wager was laid. And they ordained among them how they should say to their wives, for they ordained that every man should bid his wife leap into a basin that they should set before her, and they were sworn that none should let his wife have witting of their wager, save only they should say, "Look, wife, that whatsoever I command be done." However it be, after one of them bade his wife leap into the basin that he had set afore her on the ground, and she answered and asked: "Whereto?" and he said, "for it is my lust, and I will that ye do it." "By God," quoth she, "I will first wit whereto ye will have me leap into the basin." And for nothing her husband could do she would not do it. So her husband up with his fist, and gave her ij or iij great strokes; and then went they to the second

¹ Spoiled, discomfited.

LIFE IN THE MIDDLE AGES

merchant's house, and he commanded that whatever he bade do it should be done, but it was not long after but he bade his wife leap into the basin that was afore her on the floor, and she asked. "Whereto?" and she said she would not for him. And then he took a staff, and all to-beat her; and then they went to the third merchant's house, and there they found the meat on the board, and he whispered in one of his fellows' ears, and said, "After dinner I will assay my wife, and bid her leap into the basin." And so they set them to their dinner. And when they were set, the good man said to his wife, "Whatever I bid, let it be done, however it be." And she, that loved him and dreaded him, heard what he said, and took heed to that word; but she wist not what he meant; but it happed that they had at their dinner rere-eggs,¹ and there lacked salt on the board, and the good man said, "Wife, *sele sus table*"; and the wife understood that her husband had said, "*seyle sus table*," the which is in French, "*leap on the board*." And she, that was afraid to disobey, leapt upon the board, and threw down meat, and drink, and brake the glasses, and spilt all that there was on the board. "What," said the good man, "then can ye none other play, wife?" "Be ye mad, sir," she said, "I have done your bidding, as ye bade me to my power, notwithstanding it is your harm and mine; but I had liever ye had harm and I both, than I disobeyed your bidding. For ye said, '*seyle sus table*.'" "Nay," quoth he, "I said, '*sele sus table*,' that is to say, salt on the board." "By my troth," she said, "I understood that ye bade me leap on the board," and there was much mirth and laughing. And the other two merchants said it was no need to bid her leap into the basin, for she obeyed enough; wherefore they consented that her husband had won the wager, and they had lost both. And after she was greatly praised for her obeisance to her husband, and she was not beat, as were that other ij wives that would not do their husband's commandment. And thus poor men can chastise their wives with fear and strokes, but a gentlewoman should chastise herself with fairness, for otherwise they should not be taught.

¹ The editor of the E.E.T.S. volume offers no explanation of this word, it represents the *œuf s moids*, i.e. "scrambled eggs" of the French original.

THE LOST MARRIAGE

52. THE LOST MARRIAGE

(p 165)

I SHALL tell you of an ensample of a knight's daughter that lost her marriage by her nicety. There was a knight that had iij daughters, of the which the eldest was wedded, and there was a knight that axed the second daughter both for land and marriage, insomuch that the knight came for to see her that should be his wife, and for to be assured and affianced together, if they were pleased each with other, for neither of them had seen other before that time. And the damosel, that knew of the knight's coming, she arrayed herself in the best guise that she could for to have a slender and a fair-shapen body, and she clothed her in a cote-hardie¹ unfurred, the which sat right strait upon her, and it was great cold, great frost, and great wind; and for the simple vesture that she had upon, and for the great cold that was at that time, the colour of the maid was defaced, and she waxed all pale and black of cold. So this knight that was come for to see her, and beheld the colour of her all dead and pale, and after that he looked upon that other sister that she had, and saw her colour fresh and ruddy as a rose, (for she was well clothed, and warm against the cold, as she that thought not upon no marriage at so short a time) the knight beheld first that one sister and after that other. And when he had dined, he called two of his friends and of his kin, and said unto them, "Sirs! we be come hither for to see the daughters of the lord of this place, and I know well that I should have which that I would choose, wherefore I would have the third daughter." And his friends answered him, that it was more worship unto him for to have the elder. "Fair friends," said the knight, "ye see but little advantage therein,² for ye know well they have an elder sister, the which is wedded, and also I see the youngest, the fairest and freshest of colour, more pleasant than her second sister, for whom I was spoken unto for to have in marriage; and therefore my

¹ Close-fitting gown for ladies, or tunic for men

² *I.e.* apparently the wedded sister had taken the lion's share of the inheritance, so that there would be little pecuniary difference between the second and the third.

LIFE IN THE MIDDLE AGES

pleasaunce is to have her." And the knight axed the third daughter, which was granted him; whereof folk were marvelled, and in especial the maid that weened for to have been wedded unto the same knight. So it happed within short time after, they married the young damosel, the which the knight had refused because the cold had paled her colour and withdrawn her fairness; after when she was well clothed and furred, and the weather was changed to warmer, her colour and fairness was come again, so that she was fresher and fairer an hundred part than was her sister, the knight's wife; and so the knight said unto her, "My fair sister, when I was to wed, and I came for to see you, ye were not so fair by the seventh part as ye be now, for ye be now right fair and well coloured, and then ye were all pale and of other colour, and now ye pass your sister my wife in fairness, whereof I have great marvel." And then the knight's wife answered, "My lord, I shall tell you how it was, my sister thought well that ye should come for to affiance her as for your wife, and for to make her gentle, and small, and fair bodied, she clothed her in a simple cote-hardie, not doubled; and it was cold winter, and great frost, and great wind, and that permuted her colour, and I, that thought as much to have such wealth and worship as for to have you unto my lord without any nicety, I was well clothed with furred gowns that kept my body warm, wherefore I had better colour than she had; whereof I thank God, for therefore I gat your love; and blessed be the hour that my sister clothed herself so light, for if it had not been so, ye had not taken me for to have left her." Thus lost, as ye have heard, the elder daughter her marriage because she quainted herself.

TRAIN UP A WIFE

The British Museum Royal MS 6 E vi, is a great theological dictionary in two volumes, compiled at the beginning of the fourteenth century from many earlier authors of repute. The book illustrates in many passages the ideas of Dante's age: *e g* on fol 37 b the friars are spoken of in much the same terms as in *Par* xii, 112 ff and the author refers to the damnation of Pope Anastasius for heresy (f 360 b; cf. *Inf.* xi, 8).

53. TRAIN UP A WIFE IN THE WAY SHE SHOULD GO

(f. 214 a, under the rubric *Castigare*)

MOREOVER, a man may chastise his wife and beat her for her correction; for she is of his household, and therefore the lord may chastise his own, as it is written in Gratian's *Decretum*, part 2 c. VII q. 1. under the gloss *judicari*.¹ Also a master in the schools may chastise or beat his disciple, even though this latter be a clerk, provided only that he exceed not due measure; nor doth he thereby incur the stigma of excommunication,² even though his disciple be in Holy Orders, if the chastisement be for discipline's sake. . . . And note that clerics may be beaten with rods.

John Gower, Chaucer's friend, was probably a London merchant and a country squire: the reader should consult G. C. Macaulay's admirable essay on him in the *Camb. Hist. Eng. Lit.* vol II, chap VI. His poems are frankly satirical, but gain much force as evidence from his frequent protest that he simply voices what the public is saying around him. The following extracts are from his *Mirour del'Omme*, ed. Macaulay, lines 25, 213 ff.

54. TRICKS OF TRADE

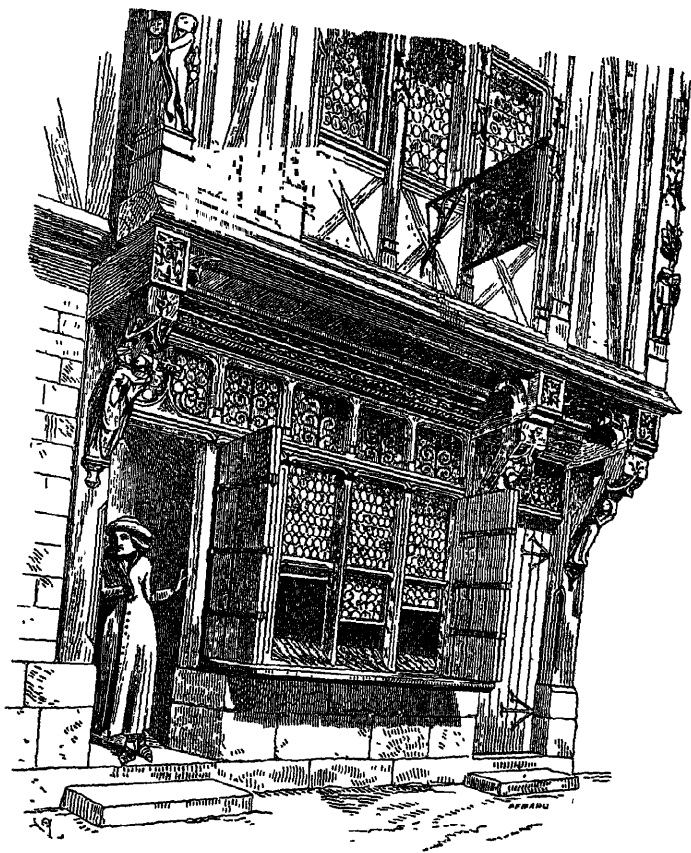
ALL men know that of our bounden duty we must preach to vices for their amendment. . . . The good are good, the evil are evil; if therefore we preach to the dishonest, the honest

¹ "He may chastise her temperately, for she is of his household." The same doctrine is laid down in part I, dist xxv, c 3, s v. *servum* "So likewise the husband is bound to chastise his wife in moderation. . . unless he be a clerk, in which case he may chastise her more severely." The Wife of Bath's last husband, being a clerk of Oxford, was possibly conscious of this privilege. Gratian's *Decretum*, though never recognized as absolutely authoritative on all points, was throughout the Middle Ages the great text-book of Canon Law.

² Under the rubric *si quis suadente diabolo*. See note to vol. I, no 71.

LIFE IN THE MIDDLE AGES

man need take no heed thereof; for each shall have reward or blame according to his work. Sooth to say, there is a difference betwixt the merchant whose thoughts are set on deceit, and him whose day is spent in honest work, both labour alike for gain, but one would sort ill with the other. There is one merchant in these days whose name is on most men's tongues: Trick is his name, and guile his nature: though thou seek from the East to the going out of the West, there is no city or good town where Trick doth not amass his ill-gotten wealth. Trick at Bordeaux, Trick at Seville, Trick at Paris buys and sells; he hath his ships and his crowd of servants, and of the choicest riches Trick hath ten times more than other folk. Trick at Florence and Venice hath his counting-house and his freedom of the city, nor less at Bruges and Ghent; to his rule, too, hath the noble city on the Thames bowed herself, which Brutus founded in old days, but which Trick stands now in the way to confound, fleecing his neighbours of their goods: for all means are alike to him whether before or behind; he followeth straight after his own lucre, and thinketh scorn of the common good. . . . In the mercer's trade also doth Trick, of his cunning, practise often divers guiles. . . . Birds of that feather never want a tongue, and Trick is more clamorous than any sparrowhawk: when he seeth strange folk, then shalt thou see him pluck and draw them by the sleeve, calling and crying: "Come," quoth he, "come in without demur! Beds, kerchiefs, and ostrich feathers—sandals, satins, and stuffs from oversea—come, I will show you all. What d'ye lack? Come buy, ye need go no further, for here is the best of all the street. . . ." Sometimes Trick is a draper. . . . men tell us, (and I believe it) that whatsoever is dark by nature hateth and avoideth the light wherefore when I see the draper in his house, methinks he hath no clear conscience. Dark is the window where he bargaineth with thee, and scarce canst thou tell the green from the blue; dark too are his ways, none may trust his word for the price of his goods. Darkly will he set thee his cloth at double price, and clinch it with an oath, darkly thus will he beguile thee all the worse, for he would persuade that he hath done thee a friendship, wherein he hath the more cozened thee, saying that he hath given thee the



A MEDIEVAL SHOP

From Viollet-le-Duc's *Dict. de l'Architecture*, t. II, p. 239

LIFE IN THE MIDDLE AGES

stuff at cost price to get thy further custom; but the measure and the market price will tell thee afterwards another tale. . . . Wouldst thou have closer knowledge of Trick the Taverner? thou shalt know him by his piment, his clarée, and his new ypocras, that help to fatten his purse when our City dames come tripping at dawn to the tavern as readily as to minster or to market. Then doth Trick make good profit; for be sure that they will try every vintage in turn, so it be not mere vinegar. Then will Trick persuade them that they may have Vernage, Greek wine and Malvesie if they will but wait; the better to cajole them of their money, he will tell them of divers sorts—wines of Crete, Ribole and Roumania, of Provence and Monterosso; so he boasteth to sell Riviera and Muscadel from his cellar, but he hath not a third part of all these, he nameth them but for fashion's sake, that he may the better entice these dames to drink. Trust me, he will draw them ten sorts of wine from one barrel, when once he can get them seated in his chairs. Then will he say, "Dear ladies, *Mesdames*, make good cheer, drink freely your good pleasure, for we have leisure enough!" Then hath Trick his heart's desire, when he hath such chamberers who know how to cheat their husbands; little doth he care whether they be thieves or no, so that he but make his profit of them. Better than any master of magic, Trick knoweth all the arts of the wine-trade; all its subtleties and its guile. He is crafty to counterfeit Rhine wine with the French vintage; nay, even such as never grew but by Thames shore, even such will he brisk up and disguise, and baptize it for good Rhenish in the pitcher: so quantly can he dissemble, that no man is so cautious but Trick will trick him in the end. And if he be evil in the matter of wine, still more evil is he in that of ale, by common repute. I say not this for the French, but for Englishmen, for those who drink daily at the alehouse; and in especial for the poor small folk who have not a farthing in the world but what they earn with the sweat of their brow, and who all cry aloud with one voice that the ale-seller is no courteous wight.

A MORTUARY CASE

The mortuary system is so curious, yet has been so neglected by historians, that the reader may be glad to see an actual case from a fifteenth-century book of precedents (Brit Mus MSS, Harl 862, f 5 a) On a peasant's death, the lord of the manor had frequently a claim upon his best beast or other possession as *mortuary* or *heriot*. Side by side with this grew up a similar claim from the parish priest It was presumed that the dead man must have failed to some extent in due payment of tithes during his lifetime, and that a gift of his second best possession to the Church would therefore be most salutary to his soul This claim had admittedly no foundation in law, but was maintained already in 1305 as a custom which, being pious and reasonable, must therefore have the binding force of law. I have dealt more fully with this system, which did much to precipitate the Reformation, in *Priests and People in Medieval England* (Simpkin, Marshall, 1s. nett) It will be noticed that the compiler of this Formulary, though he has copied actual cases into his book, often abbreviates for his own convenience or supplies alternative phraseology, as the reader will see from the brackets throughout this piece Bp Stafford's Register shows that Robert Tayllour was instituted to the Vicarage of Morwenstow, 23 February, 1408.

55. A MORTUARY CASE

IN God's name, Amen. In the presence of you, lord Bishop of Exeter, (whoever he may be, by God's etc., etc.), I, the proctor of Sir R. T. perpetual Vicar of the parish of Morstow in Cornwall, of the Diocese of Exeter, [plead] against John Martyn executor of the will (or administrator of the goods) of Richard Martyn, father of the aforesaid John, now dead, and against all who may legally appear for him, affirming that according to laudable and reasonable custom for the last (10 or 20 or 30 or 40 or 60) years last past, more or less, and indeed from a time and for a time whereunto the memory of man goeth not to the contrary, used, approved, and generally observed, and legitimately prescribed, in the said parish of Morstow, the right of taking and holding the best possession appertaining to every customary¹ parishioner who may die in that same parish, and especially whose heriot hath been paid to his worldly lord after the death of the said defunct, pertained, pertaineth, and should pertain even in future to the Vicars for the time being of the said church of Morstow,

¹ Subject to certain manorial burdens; most customary tenants were themselves serfs

LIFE IN THE MIDDLE AGES

predecessors of the said Sir Robert, as by his lawful right of taking tithes of cut timber or of taking and having the aforesaid mortuary, in the manner and form aforesaid, for all and every time etc. (as aforesaid in its own place already alleged): Nevertheless the said John Martyn, executor or administrator of the goods of the said Richard Martyn deceased, knowingly seized and still holdeth without and against the will of the said Sir Robert, one ox of black colour, valued by the common reckoning at thirteen shillings,¹ which ox at the death of the said R. Martyn had been (after the heriot paid to the Prior and Convent of Launceston, his temporal lords, on the occasion of his death) his next best possession, and thus owing to the said Vicar Sir Robert as a mortuary, in virtue of the said custom, as aforesaid, (or at least, "by means of the guile and fraud of this same John, in this matter, the Vicar hath failed to take the said ox.") And, albeit the aforesaid executor or administrator John hath been oftentimes required, in due form of law, on the part of the said Sir Robert, to deliver the said ox to the said Sir Robert and to satisfy him from his possessions in this matter according to the above estimate; yet this John *etc.* hath hitherto refused to deliver the ox as aforesaid to this same Sir Robert and to satisfy him according to his own estimate as aforesaid, and expressly refuseth it still, without form of justice, thus wickedly robbing *etc.* the said Vicar Sir Robert, and his aforesaid Vicarage of his right and possessions (or "as it were robbing him of his rights as aforesaid in the aforesaid things") in the aforesaid parish of Morstow, in the month of February and the year of our Lord 1414, seeing also that the right of taking and having this his best possession as a mortuary, in the manner and form aforesaid, pertained, pertaineth, and ought to pertain in future also to the said Vicar of the aforesaid Vicarage, (whosoever for the time being may be its Vicar, by name) in virtue of the custom aforesaid, [We pray therefore] that you, our lord Judge aforesaid, may pronounce and declare finally and definitely for the aforesaid custom and the future keeping of its observance in the aforesaid parish, and that the said executor or administrator John Martyn may be condemned to render the said

¹ From £7. 10s. to £10 modern money.

A MORTUARY CASE

ox, if he still exist, or otherwise according to the aforesaid valuation of his possessions, or some other (*etc.* as in the aforesaid place).

There are two other mortuary cases in the Formulary, fols. 5 b and 16 b. In the first (undated) the vicar of Morstow claims a blue coat value 10s from John Baldwin executor of Nicholas Day, in virtue of a custom which gave him, by way of mortuary, "the best day-garment of each parishioner that dieth in the said parish, (excepting only servants working for a certain annual wage in the same parish and also inhabiting the borough or village of Morstow)" In the second, dated 1468, "the reverend man John Snyffemore, rector of the parish church of Silvertown" claims that, from time immemorial, "if the wife of any parishioner of the aforesaid parish die, in what place or manner soever, forthwith the right of taking and having her husband's second best possession or beast, which the said husband had in his wife's lifetime, under the name of a mortuary and as a mortuary, belonged belongeth and should belong even in future to the rector of the aforesaid parish church" He therefore demands one red ox, valued at 18s, which John Laven, having lost his wife Matilda, had hitherto refused to render "to God and to the aforesaid church." Prebendary Hingeston-Randolph, whose knowledge of this diocese in the Middle Ages is unrivalled, has kindly supplied me with the following note: "John Snyffemore was presented to Silvertown (on the Resignation of John Coke) by William Wadham, Esquire, and was instituted by Bishop Lacy, at Clyst, 11 Feb, 1444/5. On his death, William Somaster was instituted, 2 March, 1479/80. Snyffemore built the north aisle of Silvertown Church at his own cost. His will, dated 18 June, 1479, is entered in Bishop Courtenay's Register. He directed that his body should be buried in the Chancel of Silvertown 'afore our Ladie.' He bequeathed £40 to build a new ambulatory in the north side of the church, and all the issues and profits of all his lands and tenements in Silvertown were to be paid yearly in sustentation of a priest to sing in the said north aisle. Moreover, he gave £38 towards the support of the foundation" To illustrate the above-mentioned cases, I subjoin an extract from the accounts of the Collegiate Church of St Mary Ottery for 1437/8 (Oliver, *Monast. Dioc. Exon.* p. 282); and a petition to the Pope extracted from Father Denifle's *Désolation des Eglises, etc.* t. I, p. 472.¹

¹ I can only draw attention briefly here to the value of this book as a mine for the student of fifteenth-century manners. I had once thought of translating from it, as an illustration of mediæval warfare, the letter of Bishop des Ursins to the États Généraux assembled at Blois in 1433 (t. I, p. 497), but the document is too painful to publish in naked English, and the reader will only find a far milder description of the same sort in vol. II, no. 63. It is a partial consolation to find that, on the repeated testimony of their enemies, the English soldiers were on the whole more humane to the French peasants than their own fellow-countrymen and nominal defenders. Another passage (t. I, p. 500) shows clearly, as Denifle notes, that the French themselves—or French rulers and statesmen, at least—

LIFE IN THE MIDDLE AGES

56. MORTUARY PROFITS

RECEIPTS from mortuaries. He accounteth for 9s for an ox, mortuary of the wife of Thomas Glade and sold to the same Thomas:—6s for a cow, the mortuary of John Harbelyn's wife and sold to the same John:—6d. for an ewe, the mortuary of Matilda Byre, sold to John At-the-Welle:—12d. for a pig, the mortuary of John Benyne sold to the widow of the same John.—1s. 6d. for a calf, the mortuary of Richard Swayne at Wakkesway:—6s. 4d for a cow, the mortuary of William Reymond, sold to the said William's widow.—1s. 2d. for a ram, the mortuary of Roger At-the-Welle's wife's mother:—6s. for a cow, the mortuary of Richard Calley of Wygdon. Whereof the sum total is £1. 11s. 8d.

Complaint from the Abbot and monks of Cerisy in the Diocese of Bayeux to the Pope, A.D. 1445.

57. MORTUARY RESULTS

WHEREAS from time immemorial, as often as any tenants that were heads of families dwelling on our manors of Cerisy or Littry chanced to die, then if they had no wives or children the monastery had the right of taking to itself and applying to its own uses all their moveable goods, if, however, they had wives and children, then such goods were divided into three equal parts between the abbot and convent, the wife, and the children; moreover, the garments also of the said householders thus deceased were applied to the use and profit of the said monastery—those of Cerisy to the benefit of the sacristy and those of Littry to the granary; and whereas the said parishioners and tenants, having become sorely diminished in their possessions and impoverished by reason of the wars and other miseries which had so long wasted those parts, began to desert

"were ashamed to speak of Joan of Arc after her execution," until the lapse of a score of years had brought out her greatness more plainly, but for this again the reader must consult the original.

MORTUARY RESULTS

the manors aforesaid and betake themselves elsewhere for fear of this burden and servitude, whereas they refused also to marry their daughters on that manor¹ to the great, (nay, to the very greatest) damage and loss of the aforesaid monastery; and also, by reason of the aforesaid chattels, very many of the inhabitants aforesaid incurred, and [long] had incurred, the sentence of excommunication by not giving over faithfully the aforesaid moveable goods, but hiding them and thus defrauding the said monastery. . . [therefore the Abbot and monks have agreed with the tenants to commute these dues for a yearly tribute of 20 *livres tournois*, until such time as the sum of 300 gold pieces might be collected for the final redemption of the burden].

Extracts 58-69 are from Dr Gairdner's 1900 edition of the *Paston Letters*, which are probably the fullest and most remarkable collection of medieval family letters existing in any language

58. WIFE TO HUSBAND

(Margaret Paston to John Paston, 28 Sept. 1443; vol. 1, p. 48.)

*To my right worshipful husband, John Paston, dwelling
in the Inner Temple at London, in haste.*

RIGHT worshipful husband, I recommend me to you, desiring heartily to hear of your welfare, thanking God of your amending of the great disease that ye have had, and I thank you for the letter that ye sent me, for by my troth my mother and I were not in heart's ease from the time that we wist of your sickness, till we wist verily of your amending. My mother behested another image of wax, of the weight of you, to our Lady of Walsingham; and she sent iiij nobles to the iiij

¹ By marrying their daughters elsewhere, the serfs would withdraw them from the heavy burdens of this manor, but they would have to pay a heavy fine for doing so. This was an inevitable consequence of the social system which made one-half of the population the property of a few great landowners. It would of course be unjust to blame the individual landlord; but it is equally unhistorical to blink the fact that such regulations tended to foster those vices of which medieval moralists complain among the rural population. See Léopold Delisle, *Études sur la Classe Agricole*, 1903, p. 187.

LIFE IN THE MIDDLE AGES

Orders of Friars at Norwich to pray for you; and I have behested to go on pilgrimage to Walsingham and to Saint Leonard's¹ for you; by my troth I had never so heavy a season as I had from the time that I wist of your sickness till I wist of your amending; and sith my heart is in no great ease, nor nought shall be, till I wot that ye be very whole. Your father and mine was this day se'nnight at Beccles for a matter of the Prior of Bromholme, and he lay at Gelderstone that night, and was there till it was ix of the clock, and the t'other day. And I sent thither for a gown, and my mother said that I should have then, till I had been there anon, and so they could none get.

My father Garneys sent me word that he should be here the next week, and my uncle also, and playen them here with their hawks, and they should have me home with them; and, so God help me! I shall excuse me of mine going thither if I may; for I suppose that I shall readilier have tidings from you here than I should have there. I shall send my mother a token that she took me, for I suppose the time is come that I should send her, if I keep the behest that I have made; I suppose I have told you what it was. I pray you heartily that ye will vouchsafe to send me a letter as hastily as ye may, if writing be no disease to you, and that ye will vouchsafe to send me word how your sore doth. If I might have had my will, I should have seen you ere this time; I would ye were at home, (if it were your ease, and your sore might be as well looked to as it is where ye be,) now liever than a gown, though it were of scarlet! I pray you, if your sore be whole, and so that ye may endure to ride, when my father come to London, that ye will asken leave, and come home when the horse shall be sent home again; for I hope ye should be kept as tenderly here as ye be at London. I may none leisure have to do writen half a quarter so much as I should say to you if I might speak with you. I shall send you another letter as hastily as I may. I thank you that ye would vouchsafe to remember my girdle, and that ye would write to me at the time, for I suppose that writing was none ease to you.

¹ St Leonard's Priory at Norwich, where there was a wonder-working shrine of King Henry VI, sainted by popular acclamation.

WIFE TO HUSBAND

Almighty God have you in His keeping, and send you health.
Written at Oxnead, in right great haste, on St Michael's
Even.

Yours,

M. PASTON.

My mother greets you well, and sendeth you God's blessing
and hers; and she prayeth you, and I pray you also, that ye
be well dieted of meat and drink, for that is the greatest help
that ye may have now to your health-ward. Your son fareth
well, blessed be God.

59. HUSBAND TO WIFE

(John Paston to Margaret Paston, 21 Sept. 1465; vol. II, p. 235.)

To my Cousin Margaret Paston.

MINE own dear sovereign lady, I recommend me to you, and
thank you of the great cheer that ye made me here to my great
cost and charge and labour. No more at this time, but that
I pray you ye will send me hither ij clue of worsted for
doublets, to wrap me this cold winter; and that ye inquire
where William Paston bought his tippet of fine worsted,
which is almost like silk, and if that be much finer than that
he should buy me after vij. or viij. shillings,¹ then buy me a
quarter and the mail thereof for collars, though it be dearer
than the other, for I would make my doublet all worsted for
worship of Norfolk, rather than like Gonnore's doublet. . .

Item, on the day after your departing, I received letters by
Will. Ros from your sons to me, and to you, and to Ric. Calle,
etc.²

Item, I shall tell you a tale,
Pampanyng and I have picked your mail

[*trunk*]

¹ *I.e.* "if that [of W. P.'s] be much finer than could be bought for 7 or 8 shillings, then etc."

² This *etc.*, as the reader will presently see, was the frequent refuge of writers unaccustomed to express themselves at length on paper: it occurs with tantalizing frequency all through these letters.

LIFE IN THE MIDDLE AGES

And taken out pieces five.
For upon trust of Calle's promise, we may soon unthrive;
And, if Calle bring us hither twenty pound
Ye shall have your pieces again, good and round;
Or else, if he will not pay you the value of the pieces, there
To the post do nail his ear;
Or else do him some other wrongs,¹
For I will no more in his default borrow;
And, but if the receiving of my livelihood be better plied
He shall Christ's curse and mine clean tried;
And look ye be merry and take no thought,
For this rhyme is cunningly wrought.
My Lord Percy and all this house
Recommend them to you, dog, cat, and mouse,
And wish ye had been here still;
For they say ye are a good gille.
No more to you at this time,
But God him save that made this rhyme.
Writ the [day] of Saint Mathee
By your true and trusty husband,

J. P.

60. BUSINESS MATCHES

(Elizabeth Clere to John Paston, junr., about 1449; vol. 1, p. 89.)

To my Cousin, John Paston, be this letter delivered.

TRUSTY and well-beloved cousin, I commend me to you, desiring to hear of your welfare and good speed in your matter, the which I pray God send you to his pleasance and to your heart's ease.

Cousin, I let you wit that Scrope hath been in this country to see my cousin your sister, and he hath spoken with my cousin your mother, and she desireth of him that he should show you the indentures made between the knight that hath his daughter and him, whether that Scrope, if he were married and fortun'd to have children, if those children should inherit his land, or his daughter the which is married. Cousin, for

¹ *Query, sorrow?*

BUSINESS MATCHES

this cause take good heed to his indentures, for he is glad to show them, or whom ye will assign with you; and he saith to me he is the last in the tail of his livelihood, the which is ccdl marks and better, as Watkin Shipdam saith, for he hath taken account of his livelihood divers times; and Scrope saith to me if he be married, and have a son and heir, his daughter that is married shall have of his livelihood 1 marks and no more; and therefore, cousin, meseemeth he were good for my cousin your sister, without that ye might get her a better. And if ye can get her a better, I would advise you to labour it in as short time as ye may goodly, for she was never in so great sorrow as she is nowadays, for she may not speak with no man, whosoever come, nor may not see nor speak with my man, nor with servants of her mother's, but that she [*the mother*] beareth her on hand otherwise than she meaneth. And she hath since Easter the most part been beaten once in the week or twice, and sometimes twice on one day, and her head broken in two or three places. Wherefore, cousin, she hath sent to me by Friar Newton in great counsel, and prayeth me that I would send to you a letter of their heaviness, and pray you to be her good brother, as her trust is in you; and she saith, if ye may see by his evidences that his children and hers may inherit, and she to have reasonable jointure, she hath heard so much of his birth and his conditions, that an ye will she will have him, whether that her mother will or will not, notwithstanding it is told her his person is simple,¹ for she saith men shall have the more duty of her if she rule her to him as she ought to do.

Cousin, it is told me there is a goodly man in your Inn, of the which the father died lately, and if ye think that he were better for her than Scrope, it would be laboured, and give Scrope a goodly answer that he be not put off till ye be sure of a better; for he said when he was with me, but if he have some comfortable answer of you, he will no more labour in this matter, because he might not see my cousin your sister, and he saith he might 'a seen her an she had been better than she is; and that causeth him to demur that her mother was not well willing, and so have I sent my cousin your mother word.

¹ *I.e.* plain.

LIFE IN THE MIDDLE AGES

Wherefore, cousin, think on this matter, for sorrow oftentimes causeth women to beset them otherwise than they should do, and if she were in that case, I wot well ye would be sorry. Cousin, I pray you burn this letter, that your men nor none other man see it; for an my cousin your mother knew that I had sent you this letter, she should never love me. No more I write to you at this time, but Holy Ghost have you in keeping. Written in haste, on St Peter's Day, by candle light.

By your Cousin,

ELIZABETH CLERE.

61. THE COURSE OF LOVE

(A.D. 1476? John Paston to Margery Brews; vol. III, p. 159)

MISTRESS, though so be that I, unacquainted with you as yet, take upon me to be thus bold as to write unto you without your knowledge and leave, yet mistress, for such poor service as I now in my mind owe you, purposing, ye not displeased, during my life to continue the same, I beseech you to pardon my boldness, and not to disdain, but to accept this simple billet to recommend me to you in such wise as I best can or may imagine to your most pleasure. And, mistress, for such report as I have heard of you by many and divers persons, (and specially by my right trusty friend, Richard Stratton, bearer hereof, to whom I beseech you to give credence in such matters as he shall on my behalf commune with you of, if it like you to listen him,) and that report causeth me to be the more bold to write unto you, so as I do; for I have heard oft-times Richard Stratton say that ye can and will take everything well that is well meant, whom I believe and trust as much as few men living, I assure you by my troth. And, mistress, I beseech you to think none otherwise in me, but that I will and shall at all seasons be ready with God's grace to accomplish all such things as I have informed and desired the said Richard on my behalf to give you knowledge of, unless it so be that against my will it come of you that I be

THE COURSE OF LOVE

cast off from your service and not willingly by my desert, and that I am and will be yours and at your commandment in every wise during my life. Here I send you this billet written with my lewd hand and sealed with my signet to remain with you for a witness against me, and to my shame and dishonour if I contrary it. And, mistress, I beseech you, in easing of the poor heart that sometime was at my rule, which now is at yours, that in as short time as can be that I may have knowledge of your intent and how ye will have me demeaned in this matter, and I will be at all seasons ready to perform in this matter and all others your pleasure, as far forth lieth in my power to do, or in all theirs that aught will do for me, with God's grace, Whom I beseech to send you the accomplishment of your most worshipful desires, mine own fair lady, for I will no further labour but to you, unto the time ye give me leave, and till I be sure that ye shall take no displeasure with my further labour.

62. THE SAME

(The same John Paston to his elder brother, Sir John Paston, 6 May, 1476; vol. III, p. 163.)

To the right worshipful Sir John Paston, Knight, lodged at the George, by Paul's Wharf, in London.

AFTER all duties of recommendation, liketh you to wit, that to my power ye be welcome again into England. And as for the Castle of Sheen, there is no more in it but Colle and his mate, and a goose may get it; but in no wise I would not that way, and my mother thinketh the same. Take not that way, if there be any other.

I understand that Mistress Fitzwalter hath a sister, a maid, to marry. I trow, an ye entreated him, she might come into Christian men's hands. I pray you speak with Master Fitzwalter of that matter for me; and ye may tell him, since that he will have my service, it were as good, and such a bargain might be made that both she and I awaited on him and my mistress his wife at our own cost, as I alone to await on him

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at his cost; for then I should be sure that I should not be flitting, an I had such a quarry¹ to keep me at home. An I have his good will, it is none impossible to bring about.

I think to be at London within a xiiij days at the farthest, and peradventure my mistress also, in counsel be it clattered. God keep you and yours

At Norwich, the vj. day of May, anno E. iiiji xvj.

J. P.

63. THE SAME

(Dame Elizabeth Brews to John Paston, Feb. 1477; vol. III, p. 169)

To my worshipful cousin, John Paston, be this billet delivered, etc.

COUSIN, I recommend me unto you, thanking you heartily for the great cheer that ye made me and all my folks, the last time that I was at Norwich; and ye promised me, that ye would never break the matter to Margery until such time as ye and I were at a point. But ye have made her such advocate for you, that I may never have rest night nor day, for calling and crying upon [me] to bring the said matter to effect, etc. And cousin, upon Friday is St Valentine's Day, and every bird chooseth him a mate, and if it like you to come on Thursday at night, and so purvey you, that ye may abide there till Monday, I trust to God that ye shall so speak to mine husband; and I shall pray that we shall bring the matter to a conclusion, etc. For, cousin,

It is but a simple oak,
That [is] cut down at the first stroke.

For ye will be reasonable, I trust to God, Which have you ever in His merciful keeping, etc.

By your cousin, Dame ELIZABETH BREWS,
otherwise shall be called by God's grace.

¹ Prize: the game at which a hawk flies.

THE COURSE OF LOVE

64. THE SAME

(Margery Brews to John Paston, Feb. 1477; vol. III, p. 170)

*Unto my right well-beloved Valentine, John Paston,
Squire, be this billet delivered, etc.*

RIGHT reverend and worshipful, and my right well-beloved Valentine, I recommend me unto you, full heartily desiring to hear of your welfare, which I beseech Almighty God long for to preserve unto His pleasure, and your heart's desire. And if it please you to hear of my welfare, I am not in good heal of body nor of heart, nor shall be till I hear from you;

For there wotteth no creature what pain that I endure,
And for to be dead, I dare it not discure. [discover

And my lady my mother hath laboured the matter to my father full diligently, but she can no more get [of dowry] than ye know of, for the which God knoweth I am full sorry. But if that ye love me, as I trust verily that ye do, ye will not leave me therefore; for if that ye had not half the livelihood that ye have, for to do the greatest labour that any woman on live might, I would not forsake you.

And if ye command me to keep me true wherever I go,
I wis I will do all my might you to love and never no mo.
And if my friends say, that I do amiss,
They shall not let me so for to do,
Mine heart me bids ever more to love you
Truly over all earthly thing,
And if they be never so wroth,
I trust it shall be better in time coming.

No more to you at this time, but the Holy Trinity have you in keeping. And I beseech you that this billet be not seen of none earthly creature save only yourself, etc.

And this letter was indited at Topcroft, with full heavy heart, etc.

By your own,

MARGERY BREWS.

LIFE IN THE MIDDLE AGES

65 THE SAME

(Sir John Paston to his brother, John Paston, 9 March, 1477,
vol. III, p. 177.)

To John Paston, Esquire, in haste.

I HAVE received your letter, and your man, J. Bykerton, by whom I know all the matter of Mistress Brews, which if it be as he saith, I pray God bring it to a good end.

Item, as for this matter of Mistress Barly, I hold it but a bare thing. I feel well that it passeth not [*blank*] mark.¹ I saw her for your sake. She is a little one; she may be a woman hereafter, if she be not old now; her person seemeth xiiij year of age, her years, men say, be full xvij. She knoweth not of the matter, I suppose; nevertheless she desired to see me as glad as I was to see her.

I pray you send me some writing to Calais of your speed with Mistress Brews. Bykerton telleth me that she loveth you well. If I died, I had liever ye had her than the Lady Wargrave; nevertheless she singeth well with an harp.

Clopton is afeard of Sir T. Grey, for he is a widower now late, and men say that he is acquainted with her of old.

No more. Written on Sunday, the ix. day of March, anno E. iijti xvi to Calais-ward.

If ye have Mistress Brews, and E. Paston Mistress Bylyngford, ye be like to be brethren.

J. PASTON, Kt.

66. THE SAME

(Margery Paston (*née* Brews) to her husband, John Paston, 18 Dec. 1477;
vol. III, p. 214.)

*To my right reverend and worshipful husband,
John Paston.*

RIGHT reverend and worshipful husband, I recommend me to you, desiring heartily to hear of your welfare, thanking you for the token that ye sent me by Edmund Perys, praying you

¹ *I.e.* there is no more to be got out of it but this (unintentionally omitted) sum of money.

THE COURSE OF LOVE

to wit that my mother sent to my father to London for a gown-cloth of musterdeuillers¹ to make of a gown for me; and he told my mother and me when he was come home that he charged you to buy it, after that he were come out of London. I pray you, if it be not bought, that ye will vouchsafe to buy it, and send it home as soon as ye may, for I have no gown to wear this winter but my black and my green a Tyer,² and that is so cumbrous that I am weary to wear it. As for the girdle that my father behested me, I spake to him thereof a little before he went to London last, and he said to me that the fault was in you, that ye would not think thereupon to do make it; but I suppose that is not so; he said it but for a 'scusation. I pray you, if ye dare take upon you, that ye will vouchsafe to do make it against ye come home, for I had never more need thereof than I have now, for I am waxed so shapely that I may not be girt in no bar of no girdle that I have, but of one. Elizabeth Peverel hath lain sick xv. or xvj. weeks of the sciatica, but she sent my mother word by Kate that she should come hither when God sent time, though she should be wheeled in a barrow. John of Damm was here, and my mother discovered me to him, and he said, by his troth that he was not gladder of nothing that he heard this twelvemonth than he was thereof. I may no longer live by my craft, I am discovered of all men that see me. Of all other things that ye desired that I should send you word of, I have sent you word of in a letter that I did write on Our Lady's Day last was. The Holy Trinity have you in His keeping. Written at Oxnead in right great haste, on the Thursday next before St Thomas's Day.

I pray you that ye will wear the ring with the image of St Margaret, that I sent you for a remembrance, till ye come home; ye have left me such a remembrance that maketh me to think upon you both day and night when I would sleep.

Yours,

M. P.

¹ A grey cloth made at Montivilliers in Normandy, and very popular here in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

² This word has baffled both editors of the letters. It may be simply *attire*.

LIFE IN THE MIDDLE AGES

67. AN ETONIAN'S ROMANCE

(William Paston, junr. (aged 19), to John Paston, 23 Feb. 1479;
vol. III, p. 240.)

*To his worshipful brother, John Paston, be this
delivered in haste.*

RIGHT reverend and worshipful brother, after all duties of recommendation, I recommend me to you, desiring to hear of your prosperity and welfare, which I pray God long to continue to His pleasure, and to your heart's desire; letting you wit that I received a letter from you, in the which letter was viijd. with the which I should buy a pair of slippers. Furthermore certifying you, as for the xiijs. iijd. which ye sent by a gentleman's man, for my board, called Thomas Newton, was delivered to mine hostess, and so to my creditor Mr Thomas Stevenson; and he heartily recommended him to you. Also he sent me word in the letter of xij.lb. figs and viij.lb. raisins. I have them not delivered, but I doubt not I shall have, for Alwether told me of them, and he said that they came after in another barge. And as for the young gentlewoman, I will certify you how I first fell in acquaintance with her. Her father is dead, there be ij. sisters of them; the elder is just wedded; at the which wedding I was with mine hostess, and also desired by the gentleman himself, called William Swan, whose dwelling is in Eton. So it fortuneed that mine hostess reported on me otherwise than I was worthy; so that her mother commanded her to make me good cheer, and so in good faith she did. She is not abiding there she is now; her dwelling is in London; but her mother and she came to a place of hers v. miles from Eton, where the wedding was, for because it was nigh to the gentleman which wedded her daughter. And on Monday next coming, that is to say, the first Monday of Clean Lent, her mother and she will go to the pardon at Sheen, and so forth to London, and there to abide in a place of hers in Bow Churchyard; and if it please you to inquire of her, her mother's name is Mistress Alborow, the age of her is by all likelihood xvijj. or xix. year at the

AN ETONIAN'S ROMANCE

furthest And as for the money and plate, it is ready whensoever she were wedded; but as for the livelihood, I trow not till after her mother's decease; but I cannot tell you for very certain, but you may know by inquiring. And as for her beauty, judge you that when ye see her, if so be that ye take the labour; and specially behold her hands, for an if it be as it is told me, she is disposed to be thick.¹

And as for my coming from Eton, I lack nothing but versifying, which I trust to have with a little continuance.

Quare, Quomodo non valet hora, valet mora,

Unde di' [*dictum*, vel *deductum*?]

Arbore jam videas exemplum. Non die possunt,

Omnia suppleri; sed tamen illa mora.

And these two verses aforesaid be of mine own making. No more to you at this time, but God have you in His keeping. Written at Eton the Even of St Matthias the Apostle in haste, with the hand of your brother.

WILLIAM PASTON, JUNR.

68. ON WITH THE NEW

(Edmund Paston to William Paston, about 1481; vol. III, p. 278.)

To my brother, William Paston, be this delivered.

I HEARTILY recommend me to you. Here is lately fallen a widow in Worsted, which was wife to one Bolt, a worsted-merchant, and worth a thousand pounds, and gave to his wife a hundred marks in money, stuff of household, and plate to the value of an hundred marks, and ten pounds by year in land. She is called a fair gentlewoman. I will for your sake see her. She is right sister, of father and mother, to Harry Ynglows. I purpose to speak with him to get his good will. This gentlewoman is about xxx. years, and has but ij. children, which shall be at the dead's charge; she was his wife but v. years. If she be any better than I write for, take it in woothe [sic] I shew the least. Thus let me have knowledge of your mind

¹ Is likely to grow stout.

LIFE IN THE MIDDLE AGES

as shortly as ye can, and when ye shall moun [sic] be in this country. And thus God send you good health and good aventure.

From Norwich, the Saturday after xij^{the} day.

Your,

E. PASTON.

69. A SAD ENDING

(The Earl of Oxford to Sir John Paston, some time after 1495; vol. III, p. 391.)

*To the right worshipful and my right entirely
well-beloved Sir John Paston, Knight.*

RIGHT worshipful and right entirely beloved, I commend me heartily to you. And whereas your brother William, my servant, is so troubled with sickness and crazed in his mind, that I may not keep him about me, wherefore I am right sorry, and at this time send him to you; praying especially that he may be kept surely and tenderly with you, to such time as God fortune him to be better assured of himself and his mind more sadly¹ disposed, which I pray God may be in short time, and preserve you long in good prosperity.

Written at my place in London, the xxvj. day of June.

OXYNFORD.

70. GOOD ALE

(From a fifteenth century MS. printed in T. Wright's *Songs and Carols* (Percy Society), p. 63.)

BRING us in no brown bread, for that is made of bran,
Nor bring us in no white bread, for therein is no game.
But bring us in good ale, and bring us in good ale;
For our blessed Lady's sake, bring us in good ale!

Bring us in no beef, for there is many bones,
But bring us in good ale, for that goeth down at once;
And bring us in good ale, etc.

¹ Seriously, responsibly.

GOOD ALE

Bring us in no bacon, for that is passing fat,
But bring us in good ale, and give us enough of that;
And bring us in good ale, etc.

Bring us in no mutton, for that is often lean,
Nor bring us in no tripes, for they be seldom clean;
But bring us in good ale, etc.

Bring us in no eggés, for there are many shells,
But bring us in good ale, and give us nothing else,
And bring us in good ale, etc.

Bring us in no butter, for therein are many hairs;
Nor bring us in no pigges flesh, for that will make us boars;
But bring us in good ale, etc.

Bring us in no puddings, for therein is all God's good;
Nor bring us in no venison, for that is not for our blood;
But bring us in good ale, etc.

Bring us in no capon's flesh, for that is often dear;
Nor bring us in no duck's flesh, for they slobber in the mere;
But bring us in good ale, and bring us in good ale,
For our blessed Lady's sake, bring us in good ale!

71. WIVES AT THE TAVERN

(*Ib.* p. 91.)

Now, gossip mine, gossip mine,
When will ye go to the wine?

I will you tell a full good sport,
How gossips gather them on a sort,
Their sick bodies for to comfort,
When they meet, in a lane or street.

But I dare not, for their displeasance,
Tell of these matters half the substance;
But yet somewhat of their governance,
As far as I dare, I will declare.

LIFE IN THE MIDDLE AGES

"Good gossip mine, where have ye be?

It is so long sith I you see.

Where is the best wine? tell you me.

Can you ought tell, [then say] full well.

"I know a draught of merry-go-down,

The best it is in all this town;

But yet would I not, for my gown,

My husband it wist, ye may me trist!¹

Call forth your gossips by and by,

Elinor, Joan, and Margery,

Margaret, Alice, and Cecily;

For they will come both all and some.

And each of them will somewhat bring,

Goose, pig, or capon's wing,

Pasties of pigeons, or some other thing;

For a gallon of wine they will not wring."

"Go before by twain and twain,

Wisely, that ye be not seen,

For I must home, and come again,

To wit ywis where my husband is.

A stripe or two God might send me,

If my husband might here see me.

She that is afeared, let her flee."

Quoth Alice then, "I dread no man."

"Now we be in tavern set,

A draught of the best let him go fet,²

To bring our husbands out of debt;

For we will spend, till God more send."

Each of them brought forth their dish;

Some brought flesh, and some [brought] fish.

Quoth Margaret meek: "Now with a wish,

I would Anne were here, she would make us cheer."

"How say you, gossips, is this wine good?"

"That it is," quoth Elinor, "by the rood;

It cherisheth the heart, and comforteth the blood;

Such junkets among shall make us live long!

¹ Trust.

² Fetch.

WIVES AT THE TAVERN

"Anne, bid fill a pot of muscadell;
For of all wines I love it well,
Sweet winès keep my body in heal;
If I had of it nought, I should take great thought."

"How look ye, gossip, at the board's end?
Not merry, gossip? God it amend.
All shall be well, else God it forfend;
Be merry and glad, and sit not so sad."

"Would God I had done after your counsel!
For my husband is so fell,
He beateth me like the devil of hell;
And the more I cry, the less mercy!"

Alice with a loud voice spake then,
"Ywis," she said, "little good he can,
That beateth or striketh any woman,
And specially his wife; God give him short life!"

Margaret meek said, "So mot I thrive,
I know no man that is alive,
That give me two strokes, but he shall have five;
I am not afeard, though I have no beard!"

One cast down her shot, and went her way.
"Gossip," quoth Elinor, "what did she pay?"
"Nought but a penny." "Lo, therefore I say,
She shall no more be of our lore.

Such guestes we may have y-now,
That will not for their shot allow.
With whom came she? gossip, with you?"
"Nay," quoth Joan, "I came alone."

"Now reckon our shot, and go we hence,
What? cost it each of us but three pence?
Pardé, this is but a small expence,
For such a sort, and all but sport.

Turn down the street where ye came out,
And we will compass round about."

"Gossip," quoth Anne, "what needeth that doubt?
Your husbands be pleased, when ye be reised.¹

¹ Raised, exalted in liquor.

LIFE IN THE MIDDLE AGES

Whatsoever any many think,
We come for nought but for good drink.
Now let us go home and wink;
For it may be seen, where we have been."
This is the thought that gossips take,
Once in the week merry will they make,
And all small drink they will forsake;
But wine of the best shall have no rest.
Some be at the tavern once in a week;
And so be some every day eke;
Or else they will groan and make them sick.
For thinges used will not be refused.
What say you, women, is it not so?
Yes, surely, and that ye well know;
And therefore let us drink all a row,
And of our singing make a good ending.
Now fill the cup, and drink to me;
And then shall we good fellows be.
And of this talking leave will we,
And speake then good of women.

The medieval "freshman" was called *begaunus* or *beanus* (=bec-jaune=greenhorn). According to the convenient fiction of his seniors, he came up from home in the shape of an uncouth and offensive wild beast, horned, tusked, and rough-haired nor could he take place in decent society until all these deformities had been removed. The rough horseplay and black-mail for which this *Depositio Cornuum* gave excuse are set forth at length in a *Scholars' Manual* composed for Heidelberg university about A.D. 1480, and frequently printed before the Reformation. This has been reprinted by F. Zarncke (*Die Deutschen Universitäten im Mittelalter*, Leipzig, 1857); I give it here in an abbreviated form. For the similar ordeals at other universities see Dr H. Rashdall, *Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages*, vol. II, pp. 628 ff.

72. THE FRESHMAN'S ORDEAL

CAMILLUS What is this stench which fills the whole place?
Faugh! it must either be some decaying corpse or a goat, most
unsavoury of beasts. Good masters and excellent fellows all,

THE FRESHMAN'S ORDEAL

how can ye sit in the midst of this stench? It availeth not even to hold one's nose: I must needs go forth or die! Come, Berthold!

Berthold. Tarry awhile, and we shall see whence it cometh.

Camillus. Well said! Search we every nook and cranny of the building till we find the source of this hog-stye odour. . . . Ha! what do I see? What monster is this? . . . Horned like a bull, tusked like a wild swine, beaked like an owl, with red and inflamed eyes that bespeak his furious mood! Didst thou ever see a devil? Methinks this is worse still. Flee, lest he fall upon us!

Berthold. Nay, I will gaze upon him, even at mine own peril! What say'st thou, Camillus? here we have a *beanus*!

Camillus. What, a beanus?

Berthold. If I be not altogether deceived, a beanus it is.

Camillus. Never before have I seen a beast which giveth so plain a promise of cruelty and ferocity as this uncouth creature!

Berthold. Peace, I will address him. Master Johann, when didst thou come hither? Of a truth thou art a fellow-countryman of mine, hold forth thy hand. What, ruffian! wilt thou tear me with thy claws? A man must be clad in mail to accost thee safely. . . . What, thou sittest, wild ass of the desert! Seest thou not here Masters of the University, reverend seniors, before whom thou shouldst humbly stand? . . . Good God! see him stand like a block of wood, stock still, shameless, though all men's eyes be upon him! . . . Mark now, good folk, how soon his hind legs grow weary; he hath raised himself up but a few minutes, and already he boweth again like a crooked old hag. See how he draweth in his neck!

Camillus. Thou hast no pity: wherefore terrify him thus? I will suffer it no more, for he is a landsman of mine. Be of good cheer, Johann, for I will defend thee; take a glass and pluck up heart of grace. . . . O butcherly boor! fearest thou not to dip thy venomous beak into the cup wherefrom thy most learned masters drank even now! Thy drink should be muddy water, where the beasts go down to the river.

Berthold. Enough now! is it a small thing that this tenderly-nurtured youth should be treated like an ox? What

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if his mother saw this, whose only darling he is? See, weepeth he not already? indeed his eyes are wet: he was moved at the sound of his mother's name.

Camillus. What can we make of him?

Berthold. He is doubtless come hither to be purged of his deformities and join the laudable company of students: go fetch a surgeon. Ha! what say I? for thou, Camillus, art a noble and renowned student in surgery. Rejoice, O Johann, and bless this happy day; for now thine hour of salvation is near, wherein thou shalt be purged of all grossness in body and mind, and shalt have thy part in every privilege of this our university. Haste thee, Camillus.

Camillus. First I will remove his horns; Berthold, reach me yonder saw. How, ass! thou kickest against thy physician!

Berthold. Hold him like an untamed horse; beware lest he hurt thee with talon or horn.

Camillus. How tough and deep-rooted are these horns! my saw is gapped, and half its stinking teeth are gone! (*producing a pair of ox-horns*): See here, thy horns, thou froward beast, which before thou couldst not see and therefore believedst not! Where now are my tooth-pincers? Hold out thy mouth. . . . Berthold, here is one tooth—here now is the second.

Berthold. I will keep these to show at a fair, as men do with sea-monsters!

Camillus. Bring a bowl and water, and odorous herbs for his beard—herbs grown at the spot where the sewer disgorges into our garden. Hold thy chin still! . . . The beard is soaked enough: where now is my razor of stout oak-splinter? . . . See John, here now is thy beard, black as the beard of Judas that betrayed Christ!

Berthold. He grows faint; he is unaccustomed to such downright surgery.

Camillus. True: his hue is gone, and the fashion of his countenance is changed, which is the token of a fragile complexion. Reach hither the ointment and the pills. [*The unsavoury ingredients of these medicines have been duly enumerated higher up.*] . . . Our remedies profit little, it seems: lest he die

THE FRESHMAN'S ORDEAL

on our hands, it were safer that he should confess his sins. Lo! he is half dead already: his knees bow under him.

Berthold. I too am in holy orders; that shall be my care. But where have I laid my surplice?... Now begin, good Johann, to confess all thy sins, and without doubt thou shalt be saved. What do I hear?... geese and chickens?... horrid crime! And what next? tell me without fear... kissed?—and thy mother's maid?—Why, this is far more grievous! ... Nevertheless, seeing that pardon must not be denied to a man truly confessed; yet again that a merciful confessor (as I am) must still enjoin some penance, this then shall be thine. For these and thine other sins, and for thy most unsavoury odour, thou shalt refresh these masters here with a right plenteous repast. But mine office is only to enjoin penance, and not to give absolution; wherefore I send you to the masters who have this authority to assoil thee. [*Here the tormentor introduces the victim to each in turn, saying*]: “Reverend master, behold the chief of sinners, whose crimes are not to be told; I am he who hath authority to enjoin his penance, wherefore I have determined that he should give his goods to be scattered broadcast; and where better than among us? He hath promised to refresh us with most excellent wine, and to spend all the silver which his father hath wrung from the ancestral farm, together with every coin which his mother abstracted from her goodman and hid in her own hoard. Go therefore, Johann, to this master, and thou shalt obtain his pardon.

[*When the whole ceremony is over, then shall all draw near and cry* Prosit, Johann!]

73. A FARMER'S WILL

(Madox, *Formulare Anglicanum*, 1702, p. 435.)

IN Dei nomine Amen. Vicesimo octavo die mensis *Novembris*, Anno Domini Millesimo cccclxviii. Y *Custans Pothyn*, hoole & fresch, make my Wille in this maner. First I bequeth my sowle to Almyghty God, to owre blessed Lady, and to all the Holy Company of hevyn; My body to be beryed in

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Chalke chirche. Also y be quethe to the hy Auter viii. *d.* Also to the Rode lyght a Cowe with v Ewes. Also to owre *Lady of Peté* iii. Ewes. Also to the Lyght of Seynt *John* Baptyste ii. Ewes. Also to a Torche vi s. viii *d.* Also to *Alson Potkyn* iii quarter barly; Also a Cowe with iii shepe, iii peyre shets parte of the best, with a bord cloth of diapur, Another of playne, iii Towels of diapur with ii Keverletts, iii blanketts, a mattas, a bolster, iii pelewes, vi Candelstikes. To *Marget Crippis* ii Candelstikes, a peyre shetis, a quarter barly. To *Thomas Harry* iii quarter barly, a peyre shetis, with a blanket. To *Thomas Crippe* a peyre shetis. To *John Martyn* a peyre shetis. To every gode-child a bushel barly. The residue of my godes I will that *Richard* and *John* my Sones, myn Executours, have and dispose for the helthe of my Sowle as they see that best ys.

74. ANOTHER

(1b.)

IN the name of God Amen. The ix day of the moneth of *February*, the yere of our Lord God a Mcccclxxiii; Y *Thomas Martyn* of the parish of *Chalke* in the shire of *Kent*, hooll of mynde & in good wit, make my testament in the manere that foluyth. First y bequethe my Sowle to Almighty God my Creatur, to our Lady Seint [Mary], & to all the blessed Seints of hevене, My body to be beryed in the Cherche of our Lady of *Chalke* forsaide. Item y bequethe to the hye Awter of the same Cherche, for tythes for geten, xii *d.* Item I bequethe to the Hye Cros Lyght v modershepe. Item to the Lyght of Seint *John* in the same Cherche v modershepe. Item to the Lyght of our Lady Pety v modershepe. Item to the Lyghts of our Lady & of *Mary Magdaleyn* v modershepe. Item y bequethe a blak yonge cowe to the Sustentacion of the Lyghtys of Seint *Anne*, Seint *Jame*, and Seint *Margarete* in the forsaide Cherche. Item to the Lyght of the Lampe in the hye Chauncell v modershepe. Item y bequethe to the reparacions of the said Cherche xxvi s. viii *d.* Item to eche of my Godchildron xii *d.* Item y bequethe to *Margarete* my

A FARMER'S WILL

Dowghter my grete bras pot, & my grettist Cawdron. Item y will that a honest Preste synge Masses in the forsaid parish of *Chalke* for my Sowle, & for the Sowle of my Fader, and for all my Frendys Sowlys, by halff a yere; and y bequethe to hym his Sallayre v marc. Item y bequethe to a Mass book to serve in the same Cherche v. marc. The Residewes of all my godes and cattels not bequethen, after my detts ben paid, my beryeng don, and thys my present Testament fulfilled, y bequethe to *Alys* [my] wiff, & to *Margarete* my Doughter. Item y will that yff hit happe the said *Margarete* with in the age of xvi yere deye, that y will that the part of all the Meva-bill godes to the same *Margarete* bequethen, remayne to *Alys* hir moder. Item hit is my will, that all my bequests & all other things that shall bee don for me, be rulyd and governyd by the advys and discrecion of *Thomas Page* my Fader in Lawe, and of my moder his wiff. And to this my present Testament y make and ordeyne my trewe Executors the forsaid *Alys* my Wiff, *Stephene Charlys of Hoo*, & *William Banaster* of *Derteforde*; & y bequethe to eche of theym for her Labour vi s. viii d. Also y will that the said *Thomas Page* my Fader be over seer; & y bequethe to hym for hys Labour vi s. viii d. Dat. daye and yere abovesaid.

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John Morton, afterwards cardinal, became Bishop of Ely in 1478. He walked barefoot the two miles from his palace at Downham to the cathedral; whence, after the installation ceremonies, he repaired to his other palace of Ely with many distinguished guests, "and a great multitude of common people, for the Banquet was great and costly." The *menu* may be found in J. Bentham's *History and Antiquities of Ely*, Appendix, p. 35. I have ventured on a few necessary emendations, and omit all but the first of the long doggerel "rehearsals" inscribed on the "subtleties," or elaborate symbolical structures of sugar, etc., of which the degenerate descendants may still be seen on wedding-cakes. I have also ventured on one or two necessary emendations of the text. *Leche*, according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, was "a dish consisting of sliced meat, eggs, fruits and spices in jelly or some other coagulating material" *Leche damaske* would be either made of damsons, or damson-coloured. *Stoker* might possibly be stock-fish, or a kind of apple called *stoken*. *Semeca* seems unintelligible as it stands. *Boateur* is probably botargo, a kind of caviare. *Bounce* is probably connected with *bun* and the French *beignet*, a kind of pancake: "*bugne* is said to be used at Lyons for a kind of fritter" (*O.E.D. s.v. bun*).

75. A BISHOP'S INSTALLATION BANQUET

¶ THE FIRST COURSE FOR THE ESTATES.

A Subtlety of a White Lion: rehearsal.

THINK and thanke, Prelate of greaté price,
That it hath pleased the abundant grace
Of King Edward, in all his actès wise,
Thee to promoten hither to his place.
This little I see, while thou hast time and space,
For to repair do aye thy busy cure;
For thy reward of heaven thou shalt be sure.

Pure pottage—Frumenty and Venison—Cygnet roasted—
Great pike in sauce—Roe roasted regardant—Pheasant
roasted—Venison in paste—Great custard—Leche purple.

A Subtlety of the Nativity of St John.

* * * *

¶ THE SECOND COURSE.

A Subtlety of the Glebe of Ely.

Jelly to [*for*] pottage—Stoker roasted—Peacock flourished
—Carp in sops—Rabbits roasted—Bream freshwater—

A BISHOP'S INSTALLATION BANQUET

Fritter Semeca (?)—Orange in paste—Tart borboyne—
Leche damaske.

A Subtlety of God as Shepherd.

* * * *

¶ THE THIRD COURSE.

A Subtlety of Saints Peter, Paul, and Andrew.

Cream of Almonds to pottage—Boateur roasted—Perch in jelly—Curlew—Plover roasted—A mould of jelly flourished—Crayfish of freshwater—Larks roasted—Fresh sturgeon—Quinces in paste—Tart poleyn—Fritter bounce—Leche royal.

*A Subtlety of the Eagle on the Tun.*¹

* * * *

Sitting at the High Dais: my Lord of Ely in the midst.

On the right hand: The Abbots of Bury and Ramsey, the Prior of Ely, the Master of the Rolls, the Priors of Barnwell and Anglesey.

On the other hand: Sir Thomas Howard, Sir John Donne, Sir John Wyngelfield, Sir Harry Wentworth, John Sapcote, Sir Edward Wodehouse, Sir Robert Chamberlain, Sir John Cheyne, Sir William Brandon, Sir Robert Fynes, John Fortescue.

The Abbot of Thorney, and my Lady Brandon, and other estates, in the Chamber.

The future cardinal's installation-feast was a poor thing compared with that of a prior of St Augustine's, Canterbury, in 1309, as recorded by a monk of that house and quoted on p. 83 of W. Fleetwood's *Chronicon Preciosum*. Six thousand guests sat down to meat, and the bill (including presents and gratuities) amounted to £287, or some £5000 of modern money. The guests consumed 53 quarters of wheat, 58 quarters of malt, 11 tuns of wine, 36 oxen, 100 hogs, 200 little pigs, 200 sheep, 1000 geese, 973 capons, hens, and pullets, 24 swans, 600 rabbits, 16 shields of brawn, 9600 eggs, with game, spice, and almonds to the price of more than £1000 modern. The sole economy was in secondary appliances; the dishes, plates and trenchers amounted only to 3300 for the six thousand, and the drinking cups to 1400.

¹ Apparently a punning rebus on Morton's name.

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The following is one of the many formal trials and executions of homicidal animals reported in full, from contemporary records of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, by Berriat-Saint-Prix in *Mémoires de la Soc des Antiquaires de France* (t. VIII, 1829, pp 403 ff.). The author quotes many other abbreviated notices of similar trials. *e g.* the mayor of Bâle, in 1474, condemned a cock to be burned alive for having laid an egg, in derogation of its proper sex. The last instance quoted is from the year 1679, when the Parliament of Aix condemned a mare to the stake. Another very amusing instance is recorded in Didron's *Annales Archéologiques*, t. VI, p. 313; and there is an article on the subject in *Merry England* for December, 1887.

76. ANIMALS BEFORE THE LAW

To all who shall see or hear these presents, Jean Lavoisier, Licentiate of Laws, and Grand Mayor of the church and monastery of my lord Saint Martin at Laon, of the Order of Prémontré, together with the bailiffs of the place aforesaid. Whereas it had been reported and affirmed to us by the Procurator-fiscal or Syndic of the monks, abbot, and convent of St Martin at Laon, that on the manor [*cense*] of Clermont-lez-Montcornet, to the said monks with all rights of high, mean, and low justice appertaining, a young pig had strangled and mutilated a young child in its cradle, son of Jehan Lenfant, cowherd of the aforesaid domain of Clermont, and of Gillon his wife, calling upon us and requiring us to proceed in this case as justice and reason desired and required; whereas further, in order to learn and know the truth of the aforesaid case, we had heard and examined upon oath the said Gillon Lenfant, with Jean Benjamin, and Jean Daudancourt, tenants of the aforesaid farm, who testified and affirmed to us upon their oath and conscience that on Easter Monday last past the said Lenfant being abroad with his cattle, the said Gillon his wife departed from the farm aforesaid in order to go to the village of Dizy, leaving the said child in her house, under charge of a daughter of hers nine years of age: in and during which time the aforesaid girl went away to play around the said farm, leaving the said child in his cradle; during which said time the pig aforesaid entered the said house and mutilated and devoured the face and throat of the child aforesaid; so that within a brief space the aforesaid child, by means of

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the bites and mutilations inflicted by the hog aforesaid, departed this life: wherefore we make known that we, in detestation and horror of this case aforesaid, and in order to keep exemplary justice, have bidden, judged, sentenced, pronounced and appointed that the said hog, being now bound in prison under lock and key in the Abbey aforesaid, shall by the common hangman be hanged by the neck until he be dead, upon a wooden gibbet near and adjoining to the standing gallows and place of execution of the aforesaid monks, which are hard by their manor of Avin. In witness whereof, we have sealed these presents with our own seal.

Johann Geiler, born at Kaisersberg near Schaffhausen in 1445, became Doctor of Theology at Bâle and Freiburg, but accepted, at the invitation of bishop and chapter, the cathedral preachship at Strasbourg (1478). Here his spiritual fervour, his hatred of abuses, and the raciness of his style, raised him to a unique position among contemporary preachers. He died at his work in 1510, looking forward to an impending catastrophe from which his strict orthodoxy shrank, while he fully recognized its necessity. - See L. Dacheux, *Jean Geiler*, Paris, 1876, from which this extract is taken (app. xxxvi, letter of Geiler in 1486 to his former pupil, Count Friedrich von Zollern, now Bishop-Elect of Augsburg).

77. A NOBLE BISHOP

I KNOW that, if thou wert now here, thou wouldst say, "Well, what thinkest thou? Counsel me; shall I or shall I not undertake this burden from which even an angel's shoulders might shrink?" I would first say that (like St Bernard when a bishop-elect consulted him in a similar case) I say nothing. For St Bernard would give no advice to such a prelate-elect, but left him to his own conscience; so also will I. In short I say nothing, because if I shall tell you (as Jesus said to those who said to Him, "tell us") you will not believe me nor let go. But perchance thou urgest me and wilt have me speak. If therefore thou wilt have it, I tell thee again and again, without hesitation: if thou wilt follow in the footsteps of the bishops of our days, saying within thyself, "Lo, I will have so many horses!" and acting accordingly, then [fear] that

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which thou hast so often heard from my lips. Again, if thou wilt follow the counsel of men of this world, holding on thy course with excommunications and such other things as are commonly done in bishops' courts, not visiting thy diocese nor effectually extirpating vices, not spending thy goods on the poor to whom indeed they pertain, not seeing to spiritual things thyself and leaving worldly things to others, but on the contrary neglecting ordinations and such duties—in short, unless thou wilt become as it were a prodigy among bishops, a phoenix, single of thine own kind, then would it be better for thee that thou hadst never been born!

78. DUKE AND BISHOP

(Geiler, *Navicula Fatuorum*, turba XLIII, nola 2.)

SOME men, when they are about to enter a church, equip themselves like hunters, bearing hawks and bells on their wrists, and followed by a pack of baying hounds, that trouble God's service. Here the bells jangle, there the barking of dogs echoes in our ears, to the hindrance of preachers and hearers, of all who do their masses and of all who say their prayers. Brother, this is no ground for *huntsmen*, but for *bedesmen*! Such conduct is most reprehensible in all men, but especially in the clergy, albeit some of these would fain excuse many things in themselves under pretext of their noble birth, claiming the right to do that which would be clearly unlawful for the commonalty, and saying that they must show themselves nobles at one time, clerics at another.¹ Against whom I am reminded of that shrewd answer which is recorded from a peasant to a bishop. This prelate, as he rode through the fields escorted by a noisy army of knights, saw a boor who had left his plough and stood on the mound that fenced his field,

¹ In the cathedrals of Auxerre and Nevers, for instance, the treasurers had the legal right of coming to service with hawk on wrist. This was because those particular canonries were hereditary in noble families; but already in the middle of the fifteenth century we find this permission causing scandal among the faithful (*Ménagier de Paris* (1846), t. 1, p. 296). The abuse of conferring high church offices on nobles was worse in Germany, however, than in most other countries.

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staring at him with open mouth and goggling eyes of wonder. To whom the Bishop said, "What thinkest thou, to stand staring thus with gaping throat and cheeks cleft to the ears?" "I was thinking," quoth he, "whether St Martin, who himself also was a bishop, was wont to go along the high road with all this din of arms and all this host of knights." Whereunto the Bishop replied, with somewhat of a blush, "I am not only a Bishop, but a Duke of the Empire, wherefore I now play the Duke. But if thou wouldst fain see the Bishop, come to the Church on such a day," (and therewith he named him a day), "and I will show you the prelate." To which the rustic made answer, with a little laugh, "But if (which Heaven forfend!) the Duke were to go and find his deserts in hell, what then would become of our Bishop?"

In *Memorials of King Henry VII* (R.S. pp. 223 ff.), Dr James Gairdner printed a paper of great interest. Henry's queen had died in February 1503. He thought of marrying again, and "his first thoughts were directed to the young queen of Naples, widow of Ferdinand the Second. To ascertain how far she was likely to prove a suitable match for him, he sent three gentlemen into Spain on a very confidential mission." Their report, which was drawn up in 1505, is here given, with their instructions, almost in full.

79. AMBASSADORS TAKE MEASURE OF A PRINCESS

H. R.

Instructions given by the King's Highness to his trusty and well beloved servants, Francis Marsin, James Braybroke, and John Stile, showing how they shall order themselves when they shall come to the presence of the old Queen of Naples and the young Queen her daughter.

1. First, after presentation and deliverance of such letters as they shall have with them to be delivered to the said queens from the lady Catherine, Princess of Wales,¹ making her

¹ Widow of prince Arthur, and already contracted now to the future Henry VIII.

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recommendation and declaration of such charges and words as shall be showed and committed unto them by the said princess to be opened and declared on her behalf to the said queens, they shall well note and mark the estate that they keep, and how they be accompanied with nobles and ladies.

Pleaseth your Grace, at our coming to the city of Valencia, the which was in the xxii^d day of June in the evening, at which time the Queens of Naples, both the old and the young, sojourned and kept their households together jointly in the King's palace, that is a little without the said city of Valencia, the which palace is called the Reyalls; . . . at the hour and time appointed we came unto the said palace, where by a servant of the said queens we were conveyed and brought through divers chambers, the which were bare and not hanged, and so unto a chamber that was hanged with black cloth, and but one window open, and on the floor there was a great carpet spread, whereon by the window side sat the old queen, and on her left hand from the window-wardes sat the young queen. Both the said queens were clothed in black cloth and also in black kerchers as mourners, and in like case were all they that waited on the said queens. On the right hand of the queens in the window stood an ancient duke in a long beard, whose name is the duke Fernandin of Naples, and two of his sons, and other knights and gentlemen to the number of twenty persons or thereabouts, and on the left hand of the queens there sat the duchess, the wife of the said Fernandin, and a duchess of the parties of Greece and the Marchesa de Chara, the Countessa de Tortona, and the Countessa de Montorio, and Donia Maria de Enrykes, the old queen's niece, and three daughters of the duke Fernanderies, and other ladies and gentlewomen to the number of xviii or xx^{tie} persons. . . .

2. *Item, to take good heed and mark that estate the said queens keep, and whether they keep their estates and households apart or in one house together and how they be accompanied, and what lords and ladies they have about them.*

As touching this article the principal points be rehearsed in the first article before rehearsed. . . .

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3. *Item, if it shall fortune the said King's servants to find the said queens keeping their estates together, they shall well and assuredly note and mark the manner of keeping and ordering them in their estates, with the countenance and manner of every of them, and such answer as they shall make upon the speech and communication as they shall have with them at the deliverance of the said letters and declaration of the other matters before mentioned, and to mark her discretion, wisdom, and gravity in her said communication and answer in every behalf.*

4. *Item, they shall in likewise endeavour to understand whether the young queen speak any other languages but Spanish and Italian, and whether she can speak any French or Latin.*

As to this article, as far as that we can understand and know that the said young queen can speak no languages except Spanish and Italian. It is said that she understands both Latin and French, but she speaketh none.

5. *Item, specially to mark and note well the age and stature of the said young queen, and the features of her body.*

As to this article, as to the age of the said young queen, it is seven and twenty years and not much more; and as to the stature of her person we cannot perfectly understand nor know, for commonly when that we came into her presence her grace was sitting on a pillow, and other ii times we saw her going on her foot going overthwart a chamber that was not broad, where she came in at a door and came unto the queen her mother, being in the same chamber and sat down by her, at the which both times she wore slippers after the manner of the country in such wise that we could not come to any perfect knowledge of the height of the said queen. And as to the features of her body of the said young queen, forasmuch as that at all times that we have seen her grace ever she had a great mantle of cloth on her in such wise after the manner of that country that a man shall not lightly perceive anything except only the visage, wherefore we could not be in certain of any such features of her body, but as far as that we can perceive and judge that she is of no high stature but of a middle stature after our judgment by the reason of the height of her slippers whereof we have seen an ensample.

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6. *Item, specially to mark the favor of her visage, whether she be painted or not, and whether it be fat or lean, sharp or round, and whether her countenance be cheerful and amiable, frowning or melancholy, stedfast or light, or blushing in communication.*

As to this article, as far as that we can perceive or know, that the said queen is not painted, and the favor of her visage is after her stature, of a very good compass and amiable, and somewhat round and fat, and the countenance cheerful, not frowning, and stedfast, and not light nor bold-hardy in speech, but with a demure womanly shamefaced countenance, and of a few words, as that we could perceive as we can think that she uttered the fewer words by cause that the queen her mother was present, which had all the sayings, and the young queen sat as demure as a maiden, and some time talking with ladies that sat about her with a womanly laughing cheer and countenance, and with a good gravity, always the ladies talking with her having their countenances towards her grace with reverences and honor and obedience.

7. *Item, to note the clearness of her skin.*

As to this article, the said queen is very fair and clear of skin as far as we could perceive by her visage neck and hands, the which we saw and well perceived.

8. *Item, to note the colours of her hair.*

As to this article, by that we could see and perceive by the brows of the said queen, and by the ends of some of her hairs that we perceived through her kerchers, it should seem her hair to be a brown hair of colour.

9. *Item, to note well her eyes, brows, teeth and lips.*

As to this article, the eyes of the said queen be of colour brown, somewhat greyish; and her brows of a brown hair and very small like a wire of hair; and her teeth fair and clean, and as far as we could perceive, well set; and her lips somewhat round and thick, according to the proportion of her visage, the which right well becometh the said queen.

10. *Item, to mark well the fashion of her nose and the height and breadth of her forehead.*

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As to this article, the fashion of her nose is a little rising in the midward, and a little coming or bowing towards the end, and she is much like nosed unto the queen her mother. And as to her forehead, the height or the breadth thereof we could not perfectly discern, for the manner of the wearing of the kerchers or tuckas in that country is such that a man cannot well judge it, for their kerchers coming down to their brows, and much the less we could come by the very knowledge of that cause for that the queen weared black kerchers.

11. *Item, specially to note her complexion.*

As to this article, as far as we can perceive the said queen is of a very fair sanguine complexion and clean.

12. *Item, to mark her arms, whether they be great or small, long or short.*

As to this article, as that we can perceive and know, that the arms of the said queen be somewhat round and not very small, by that we could perceive when that she putteth forth her hand when that we did kiss it; and as to the length of her arm, to our understanding, it is of a good proportion unto her personage and stature of height.

13. *Item, to see her hands bare, and to note the fashion of them, whether the palm of her hand be thick or thin, and whether her hands be fat or lean, long or short.*

As to this article, we saw the hands of the said queen bare at three sundry times that we kissed her said hands, whereby we perceived the said queen to be right fair handed, and according to her personage, they be somewhat fully and soft and fair and clean skinned.

14. *Item, to note her fingers, whether they be long or short, small or great, broad or narrow before.*

As to this article, the fingers of the said queen be right fair and small, and of a meetly length and breadth before, according unto her personage very fair handed.

15. *Item, to mark whether her neck be long or short, small or great.*

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As to this article, the neck of the said queen is fully and comely, and not misshapen, nor very short nor long, but meetly after the proportion of her personage; but her neck seemeth for to be shorter because that her breasts be fully and somewhat big.

16. *Item, to mark her breasts and paps, whether they be big or small.*

As to this article, the said queen's breasts be somewhat great and fully, and inasmuch as that they were trussed somewhat high, after the manner of the country, the which causeth her grace for to seem much the fullier and her neck to be the shorter.

17. *Item, to mark whether there appear any hair about her lips or not.*

As to this article, as far as that we can perceive and see, the said queen hath no hair appearing about her lips or mouth, but she is very clear skinned.

18. *Item, that they endeavour them to speak with the said young queen fasting, and that she may tell unto them some matter at length, and to approach as near to her mouth as they honestly may, to the intent that they may feel the condition of her breath, whether it be sweet or not, and to mark at every time when they speak with her if they feel any savour of spices, rosewater, or musk by the breath of her mouth or not.*

To this article: we could never come unto the speech of the said queen fasting, wherefore we could nor might not attain to knowledge of that part of this article, notwithstanding at such other times as we have spoken and have had communication with the said queen, we have approached as nigh unto her visage as that conveniently we might do, and we could feel no savour of any spices or waters, and we think verily by the favour of her visage and cleanness of her complexion and of her mouth that the said queen is like for to be of a sweet savour and well eyed.

19. *Item, to note the height of her stature and to inquire whether she wear any slippers, and of what height her slippers be, to the intent that they be not deceived in the very height and*

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stature of her; and if they may come to the sight of her slippers, then to note the fashion of her foot.

As to this article of the height and stature of the said young queen, as in the vth article of this book it is answered that we could not come by the perfect knowledge of her height, forasmuch as that her grace weareth slippers after the manner of the country whereof we saw the fashion the which be of vi fingers breadth, of height large, and her foot after the proportion of the same is but small, but by the slipper the greatness of her foot cannot be known, notwithstanding by the height of her slipper, considering the height that she appeared unto our sight being a-foot, her grace seemed not to be of high stature, and also by cause of the manner of the clothing that women do use and wear after the manner of the country, and also she of herself is somewhat round and well liking, the which causeth her grace for to seem lesser in height.

20. *Item, to inquire whether she have any sickness of her nativity, deformity or blemish in her body, and what that should be, or whether she hath been commonly in health or sometimes sick and sometimes whole, and to know the specialties of such diseases and sickness.*

As to this article we have inquired for to come by the knowledge thereof to the best that we can, and as it hath been by us considered that such secret causes be unto all persons unknown, except unto her physicians, apothecary, or secret women of her chamber, and for the next remedy for to come by any knowledge thereof we acquainted ourselves with one Pastorell, a Neapolitan, the which is a wise man, and he is apothecary and in manner physician to the said queens, both to the old and young, with the which apothecary we had divers times pastimes and communications, amongst the which sometimes we asked such questions if that the said young queen had any such infirmities as in the said articles before be specified; whereunto the said apothecary said, "I have served the said queen many years, being her grace a little child hitherunto, and ever she hath been in as much health as any gentlewoman that ever I had known, and of so noble a nature

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and complexion, having in her person no disconformity nor cause of sickness."

21. *Item, whether she be in any singular favour with the King of Arragon her uncle, and whether she have any resemblance in visage, countenance, or complexion to him.*

As to this article, we have understood by the sayings of many and divers persons the King of Arragon favoureth and right much loveth the old queen his sister, the which queen is alike unto the said King her brother, as any man and woman may be like unto another, and also right much he loveth and favoureth the young queen his niece, and that the said king intendeth for to promote her unto some excellent marriage, and that she shall have as much or more of his gift than any of his own daughters had, for somewhat of favour the said young queen is like unto the King her uncle and especially in the fashion of her nose and complexion. Moreover a common saying is in all Spain and in the King's court that the said young queen shall be married unto the King of England our sovereign lord by the means and labor of the King her uncle.

22. *Item, to inquire of the manner of her diet and whether she be a great feeder or drinker, and whether she useth often to eat or drink, and whether she drinketh wine or water or both.*

As to this article, it hath been shown unto us by one Pastorell, the which is apothecary unto the said queen, and also by one Sorya, the which is a household servant, the which two persons be much in the presence of the said queen when that she eateth and drinketh and as they do report and say that the said queen is a good feeder, and eateth well her meat twice on a day, and that her grace drinketh not often, and that she drinketh most commonly water, and sometimes that water is boiled with cinnamon, and sometimes she drinketh ipocras, but not often.

23. *Item, the King's said servants shall also at their coming to the parties of Spain diligently inquire for some cunning painter having good experience in making and painting of visages and portraitures, and such one they shall take with them*

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to the place where the said queens make their abode, to the intent that the said painter may draw a picture of the visage and semblance of the said young queen, as like unto her as it can or may be conveniently done, which picture and image they shall substantially note and mark in every point and circumstance, so that it agree in similitude and likeness as near as it may possible to the very visage, countenance and semblance of the said queen. And in case they may perceive that the painter at the first or second making thereof hath not made the same perfect to her similitude and likeness, or that he hath omitted any feature or circumstance, either in colours or other proportions of the said visage, then they shall cause the same painter, or some other the most cunning painter that they can get, so often times to renew and reform the same picture till it be made perfect and agreeable in every behalf with the very image and likeness of visage of the said queen.

There is no answer to this article.

24. *Item, the said King's servants, by the wisest ways that they can use, shall make inquisition and ensearch what land or livelihood the said young queen hath or shall have after the decease of her mother, either by the title of jointure or otherwise, in the realm of Naples, or in any other place or country, what is the yearly value thereof, and whether she shall have the same to her and her heirs for ever or else during her life only, and to know the specialities of the title and value thereof in every behalf as near as they can.*

Here the ambassadors pumped Pastorell again, and one "Martyn de Albistur, master of a ship"; but neither could give a satisfactory answer to this all-important question. As the editor puts it (p. xlix) "The young queen appears to have had but one disqualification. She was healthy, beautiful, and well formed, but moneyless." Henry VII remained a widower.

80. A HEALTHY APPETITE

(*Lubecksche Chronik* (ed. J. F. Faust, 1619). Appendix P, p. 292, "Of Eaters"—apparently about A.D. 1550)

It is recorded by men worthy of belief that a man came to a hostelry in Lubeck a few years since, and bade the Host prepare for certain persons whom he had bidden to a supper;

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for which, (as he said) he would honourably pay. When all had been done as he had bidden, and the supper-time was come, no guests appeared; whereat the Host was sore troubled. But the guest desired him to serve up all the food that he had cooked, and for as many persons as he had ordered it; "which," (said he) "I will honourably pay." It was done as he had bidden; whereupon he ate up all that was set before him, and passed back the empty dishes to the Hostess. When the Host had marked this, and the time of reckoning was now come, then said he to the guest, "Ye shall have this meal for a free gift, if only ye will see to it that I lose not by making a wager in trust upon you." "Yea," said the Guest, "so much may ye boldly do in trust upon me; I am he who can help you out"; and the Host knew that he was safe. Now it befel that a Shipman came to Lubeck with a load of butter from Sweden; to whom the Host went to bargain for a tub of butter, saying in mocking words to the Shipman, "What shall I give thee for this little keg of butter?" Then answered the Shipman in wrath at his mockery "Holdest thou this for a little keg? Methinks it is a full barrel of butter." To whom the Host: "yea, verily, a pitiful barrel, that a man might eat up at a single meal!" Whereupon the Shipman was sore troubled, and spake: "Bring me the man who can eat up this barrel of butter at a meal, and I will give thee my ship with all my goods that are in her, if thou too wilt set as much to wager for thine own part!" Thereupon they accorded, and each gave pledges to the other. Then the Host brought his guest, who bade him be of good cheer, for he would help him loyally out of his need: as also he did, to the astonishment of all that saw him, and at last begged for one or two halfpenny-rolls wherewith to wipe the staves clean. Then began the Shipman to rage like one possessed, and to call down all the curses in the world upon this Eater's head, saying, "Is it a small thing that thou hast lost me my ship and my goods, but wilt thou also scrape the staves clean?" I would never have recorded so strange a story, but that it is plainly reported as true by common testimony.

[The curious reader may compare this with the tract by John Taylor, the Water-Poet, on Nicholas Wood, "the great

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Eater of Kent," who in later life lost nearly all his teeth "in eating a quarter of mutton, bones and all, at Ashford." Wood far outstripped his predecessor Wolner of Windsor, who digested iron, glass, and oyster-shells, but was at length "by a raw eel over-mastered."]

More's English Works (as Principal Lindsay writes on p. 17 of the third volume of the *Camb. Hist. Eng. Lit.*) "deserve more consideration than they usually receive." Yet he vouchsafes them no further consideration; and later on Mr Routh mentions one of them only to disparage it (p. 80). Since they are practically inaccessible to the general reader (for the folio costs from £25 to £50 according to its condition) I give in these volumes some stories which show him at his best as a raconteur, and of which no. 61 in vol. iv is doubly interesting for the use that Shakespeare made of it. In the *Dialogue* More is arguing in his own person against a disputant of quasi-heretical leanings, generally alluded to as the *Messenger* or *your Friend*.

81. FEMININE PERVERSITY

(p. 1187. Anthony speaks.)

THERE was here in Buda in king Ladislaus' days a good poor honest man's wife. This woman was so fiendish that the devil, perceiving her nature, put her in the mind that she should anger her husband so sore that she might give him occasion to kill her, and then should he be hanged for her. *Vincent*. This was a strange temptation indeed. What the devil should she be the better then? *Anthony*. Nothing but that it eased her shrewd stomach before, to think that her husband should be hanged after. And peradventure if you look about the world and consider it well, you shall find more such stomachs than a few. Have you never heard no furious body plainly say, that to see some such man have a mischief, he would with good will be content to lie as long in hell as God lieth in heaven? *Vincent*. Forsooth and some such have I heard of. *Anthony*. This mind of his was not much less mad than hers, but rather haply the more mad of the twain; for the woman peradventure did not cast so far peril therein. But to tell you now to what good pass her charitable purpose came.

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As her husband (the man was a carpenter) stood hewing with his chip-axe upon a piece of timber, she began after her old guise so to revile him that the man waxed wroth at last, and bade her get her in, or he would lay the helve of his axe about her back, and said also that it were little sin even with the axe-head to chop off that unhappy head of hers, that carried such an ungracious tongue therein. At that word the devil took his time, and whetted her tongue against her teeth. And when it was well sharpened she sware to him in very fierce anger, "By the mass, villain husband, I would thou wouldest: here lieth mine head, lo!" (and therewith down she laid her head upon the same timber log) "if thou smite it not off, I beshrew thy villainous heart!" With that likewise, as the devil stood at her elbow, so stood (as I heard say) his good angel at his, and gave him ghostly courage, and bade him be bold and do it. And so the good man up with his chip-axe, and at a chop chopped off her head indeed. There were standing other folk by, which had a good sport to hear her chide, but little they looked for this chance, till it was done ere they could let it. They said they heard her tongue babble in her head and call villain, villain! twice after that the head was from the body. At the least wise afterwards unto the king thus they reported all, except only one, and that was a woman, and she said that she heard it not. *Vincent* Forsooth, this was a wonderful work. What came, uncle, of the man? *Anthony*. The king gave him his pardon. *Vincent*. Verily, he might in conscience do no less. *Anthony*. But then was it farther almost at another point, that there should have been a statute made, that in such case, there should never after pardon be granted, but the truth being able to be proved, none husband should need any pardon, but should have leave by the law to follow the example of the carpenter, and do the same. *Vincent*. How happed it, uncle, that that good law was left unmade? *Anthony*. How happed it? as it happeth, Cousin, that many more be left unmade as well as it, and within a little as good as it too, both here and in other countries, and sometimes some worse made in their stead. But, as they say, the let of that law was the Queen's grace (God forgive her soul)! It was the greatest thing, I ween, good lady, that she

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had to answer for when she died. For surely, save for that one thing, she was a full blessed woman. But letting now the law pass, this temptation in procuring her own death was unto this carpenter's wife no tribulation at all, as far as ever men could perceive. For it liked her well to think thereon, and she even longed therefore. And therefore if she had before told you or me her mind, and that she would so fain bring it so to pass, we could have had none occasion to comfort her as one that were in tribulation. But, marry! counsel her (as I told you before) we might to refrain and amend that malicious devilish mind. *Vincent.* Verily that is truth. But such as are well willing to do any purpose that is so shameful, will never tell their mind to no body for very shame. *Anthony.* Son, men will not indeed. And yet are there some again that, be their intent never so shameful, find some yet whom their heart serveth them to make of their counsel therein. Some of my folk here can tell you that, no longer ago than even yesterday, one that came out of Vienna showed us among other talking that a rich widow (but I forgot to ask him where it happened) having all her life an high proud mind and a fell, as those two virtues are wont alway to keep company together, was at debate with another neighbour of hers in the town. And on a time she made of her counsel a poor neighbour of hers, whom she thought for money she might induce to follow her mind. With him she secretly brake, and offered him ten ducats for his labour, to do so much for her as in a morning early to come to her house, and with an axe, unknown, privily strike off her head; and when he had so done, then convey the bloody axe into the house of him with whom she was at debate, in some such manner wise as it might be thought that he had murdered her for malice, and then she thought she should be taken for a martyr. And yet had she further devised, that another sum of money should after be sent to Rome, and there should be means made to the Pope that she might in all haste be canonized. This poor man promised, but intended not to perform it; howbeit, when he deferred it, she provided the axe herself, and he appointed with her the morning when he should come and do it; and thereupon into her house he came. But then set he such other folk as he would

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should know her frantic fantasy, in such place appointed as they might well hear her and him talk together. And after that he had talked with her thereof what he would, so much as he thought was enough, he made her lie down, and took up the axe in his own hand, and with the other hand he felt the edge, and found a fault that it was not sharp, and that therefore he would in no wise do it till he had grounden it sharp; he could not else, he said, for pity, it would put her to so much pain. And so, full sore against her will, for that time she kept her head still. But because she would no more suffer any more deceive her so and food her forth with delays, ere it was very long after, she hung herself [with] her own hands. *Vincent.* Forsooth, here was a tragical story, whereof I never heard the like. *Anthony.* Forsooth, the party that told it me sware that he knew it for a truth; and himself is, I promise you, such as I reckon for right honest and of substantial truth.

Now here she letted not, as shameful a mind as she had, to make one of her counsel yet; and yet, as I remember, another too, whom she trusted with the money that should procure her canonization. And here I wot well, that her temptation came not of fear but of high malice and pride. But then was she so glad in the pleasant device thereof, that, as I showed you, she took it for no tribulation, and therefore comforting of her could have no place; but if men should anything give her toward her help it must have been, as I told you, good counsel. And therefore, as I said, this kind of temptation to a man's own destruction, which requireth counsel, and is out of tribulation, was out of our matter, that is to treat of comfort in tribulation.

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